# THE ORGANIZABILITY OF LABOR

BY

WILLIAM O. WEYFORTH

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Board of University Studies of The Johns Hopkins University in Conformity with the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

1915

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# PREFACE

This monograph had its origin in an investigation carried on by the author while a member of the Economic Seminary of the Johns Hopkins University. The principal sources of information have been the trade-union publications contained in the Johns Hopkins library. Various government reports were frequently consulted, and valuable information was obtained from the monographs of former members of the Economic Seminary upon trade-union activities. Documentary study was also supplemented by numerous personal interviews with trade-union officials.

The author wishes to express his appreciation of the helpful criticism and advice received from Professor J. H. Hollander and Professor G. E. Barnett.

W. O. W.

# THE ORGANIZABILITY OF LABOR

## INTRODUCTION

Unrestrained individualism belongs to the past history of our economic life. The policy of laissez faire, when put into practice at the beginning of our present industrial system, led to evils which are familiar to all students of economic history. Gradually the free play of individualistic competition has been interfered with in one form or another, until today we have passed far from the ideal of Adam Smith. This interference, so far as it is concerned with the so-called labor problem, arises from two sources: (1) state legislation in such forms as factory acts and laws fixing the maximum hours of labor or the minimum rates of wages; (2) voluntary associations, of which by far the most important type is the labor union, by means of which also working conditions, hours of labor, and wages may in some degree be regulated.

What limits can we assign to this interference? The limits of the state's control over industrial life must, in the long run, depend simply upon the idea which exists among the people of the state as to what is expedient, constitutional restraints to the contrary notwithstanding; for such impediments may clearly be set aside if a sufficient proportion of the electorate so determines. On the other hand, it is obvious that the possibilities of regulation through trade unions must depend primarily upon the extent to which the laboring force can be organized into effective associations; in other words, upon the organizability of labor.

A detailed investigation by Dr. Wolman[1] of the extent

[1] L. Wolman, "The Extent of Labor Organization in the United States in 1910," in Quarterly Journal of Economics, vol. xxx, p. 499.

of organization in the United States in 1910 showed that the total membership of American labor unions at that time was 2,100,000. Inasmuch as the total number of persons gainfully employed in this year was over 38,000,000, it appears that the proportion of trade unionists among those employed in industry was comparatively small, only 5.5 per cent; and the importance of labor organizations as part of the regulative system of modern industrial life might seem correspondingly slight. The strength of trade unionism, however, cannot be measured in this rough manner. We should not expect trade unions to include within their ranks all persons gainfully occupied. Most of those in the employing and salaried classes would be definitely excluded. The same thing is true of most of those persons for the organization of whom little or no effort is expended because of their isolation, their lack of class consciousness, or their peculiar relation to the state; for example, farm laborers and domestic servants, clerks and stenographers, firemen and policemen.[2] When allowance was made for these classes and also for those workers who are excluded from the unions because below the age limit required for membership by the rules of most of these bodies, the conclusion was reached that the "extent of organization of those persons in industry whom trade unions make definite and sustained efforts to organize" was, roughly speaking, 18.4 per cent in 1910.[3] Although the absolute number of trade unionists has increased considerably within the past six years, the percentage of organized workers probably remains not far from the same.

It is evident, therefore, that, if collectivism is to realize its highest possibilities in the solution of our industrial problems, much yet remains to be done in the organizing of

[2] It is not meant to imply that the above classes are altogether beyond the power of organization. In fact there are unions of letter carriers, post-office clerks, railway clerks, and retail clerks. But, generally speaking, trade unionism is a movement of the manual workers, and even among the latter no serious effort has been made to organize such isolated classes as those mentioned above.

[3] Wolman, The Extent of Labor Organization, p. 504.

labor. Of course, it must be borne in mind that unorganized workmen are often affected in an important manner by the regulations brought about through the efforts of the organized. For instance, improvements in sanitary conditions and shortening of the hours of labor may be obtained by the organized skilled workers in a particular shop or industry, necessitating the according of similar advantages to all the workers in the shop or industry involved, unorganized as well as organized. On the other hand, in the matter of wages, not only do the unorganized classes reap no advantage from the activities of the trade unions, but it is possible that they may even suffer a detriment thereby, since an increase in wages gained by the organized workers may be obtained at the expense of the party weakest in bargaining power, namely, the unorganized workers. Consequently, if trade unionism is to be effective in forwarding the realization of our ideals of social justice, it is clear that there is room for a wide extension of organization in the future.

It is the purpose of this study to analyze the problems which have arisen in connection with the attempt to organize those workers who may be definitely included within the program of trade unionism, that is, that residuum of wage-earners of whom, as was pointed out above, 18.4 per cent were organized in 1910. In order to understand the difficulties in the way of organization and to appreciate the possibilities of trade-union growth, it is necessary to know something about the mechanism of organizing or, in other words, the ways and means by which organization is brought about. In this connection there are three problems involved. First, individuals must be brought together for combined action. Here it is a problem of getting the men into the union. Second, this original combination of forces must be given stability and permanence. Here it is a problem of holding the men in the union. Problems of this sort are naturally present, although probably in different degrees, in forming any sort of association, trade union or other-

wise. In the organizing of labor, however, still a third factor is found, namely, the attitude of the employer toward the organization of his employees. Since this attitude has usually been one of hostility and has led to efforts to prevent the formation of unions, the complete analysis of the mechanism of organizing requires also a consideration of the methods by which the opposition of the employer is overcome and of the difficulties and limitations in the way of the effective application of these methods.

After the discussion of these general principles, we are in a position to consider some of the specific factors which have hindered a wider extension of trade unionism or have fostered its growth. In this connection we are concerned with the effect upon organization of certain conditions (1) in the management of the union itself, (2) in the characteristics of particular classes of workmen, (3) in the nature of the business organization, (4) in the technical nature of various trades and industries, and (5) in the general economic life and progress of the country. The influence of public opinion will also be considered.

In the discussion of the problems thus arising no attempt will be made to take account of every possible motive or cause that may at times be operative, but attention will necessarily be confined to those phases of the subject which involve principles of importance.

# CHAPTER I

## Methods and Agencies of Organizing

The coming together of workmen to form labor organizations is not an altogether spontaneous process. It is true that it at times happens that a new grievance causes a number of workmen to rise up in unanimous protest. An episode which affords an interesting example of this is related by Mr. Joseph R. Buchanan. In May, 1884, the Union Pacific Railroad posted in its shops notices that wages for all men in the shops would be reduced from ten to twenty-five per cent. The result was a strike of all the men. Mr. Buchanan says: "There is no record of another such strike in the whole history of the labor movement in this country. Not a shop on the system was organized when the notice of reduction was posted, and yet, inside of thirty-six hours, every shop from Omaha to Ogden and upon all the branch lines was on strike."[1]

Even such a spontaneous outburst, however, may lead to nothing in the way of permanent organization. Thus in this case the company capitulated within four days, and work was resumed at the old wages. But as soon as the order was recalled, some of the men were for abandoning further steps toward organization. They were advised, however, to continue their efforts in case of future trouble. This advice was acted upon, and several organizers were put upon the road within a week after the close of the strike. Within thirty days, Mr. Buchanan asserts, there was a healthy assembly of the Knights of Labor at each important point on the system. Here what was needed to crystallize a temporary combination of labor into a permanent organization was the assumption of leadership by

[1] The Story of a Labor Agitator, pp. 70–78.

certain individuals of greater forcefulness, of larger executive capacity, and of a more vigorous faith in the principle of organization than that possessed by the ordinary type of mechanic employed in the shops. The necessity for leadership as exhibited in this instance is typical of the condition throughout the entire field of labor organization.

Still another factor is necessary for the formation of a local union, namely, a stimulus. In the case described this stimulus was provided by an overt act of the employers, involving plainly disastrous consequences to the workmen, and such instances as this doubtless occur frequently in the industrial life of the country. But in many businesses work may run along for years without the occurrence of any such clearcut grievance, and during these years the workmen, either through ignorance and diffidence, or on account of some more worthy cause, may carry on their work in resignation or contentment, as the case may be. Or even in case there is a vague desire within some of the men for better conditions and higher wages, together with a belief in the possibility of achieving these through united action, nevertheless, unless there exists among their number some leader or leaders of aggressiveness and magnetism, this incipient union sentiment may never crystallize into practical organization. Under circumstances such as these some stimulus from without is necessary if organization is to result.

From what sources, then, is this stimulus, as well as leadership, to be obtained? In the early days of trade unionism, before the development of federated leagues or national unions or any other form of central organization, such as the Knights of Labor or the American Federation of Labor, it is evident that little reliance could be placed upon outside sources for these two factors, and during these years the growth of union membership in all trades was comparatively slight. Under such conditions, unless a proper stimulus and efficient leadership happened to exist among the group needing organization, dependence had to be

placed upon the chance arrival in that group of some travelling workman who was himself thoroughly imbued with the spirit of trade unionism and who possessed sufficient courage to run the risk of antagonizing his employer and sufficient enthusiasm and forcefulness to convince his fellow-workmen that they ought to be organized. After the formation of a central body, however, it became possible to develop a more systematic and dependable scheme of extending organization.

Consequently we never find a wide or rapid extension of organization until the individual local unions originally formed have banded themselves together in some sort of central association. The quickened growth of organization in a trade or industry after the formation of a national union therein is a phenomenon which can be observed in practically any union. The early history of the Molders will serve as a convenient example. At the formation of the central body in 1859 but twelve unions were represented.[2] For several years the organization did not amount to much. At the fourth convention in January, 1863, but fourteen unions were represented, about twenty-six unions being in existence at this time.[3] Immediately after this convention, however, the president of the national union started out upon an organizing trip. During the year he succeeded in organizing eighteen new unions and in reorganizing sixteen others.[4] In the next two years, 1864–1866, he organized sixty-four new unions and reorganized twenty-four.[5] At the convention in 1867 seventy-four local unions were represented.[6] For some years after this the union made no advance and even declined, but its rapid growth during the years mentioned illustrates how the stimulus and leadership of an officer well qualified and specially commissioned for organizing work may bring to a

[2] Iron Molders' International Journal, January 31, 1874, p. 1.
[3] Ibid., May 31, 1874, p. 351; June 30, 1874, p. 385.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid., July, 1909, p. 433.
[6] Ibid., p. 435.

focus in a short time possibilities of unionism which might otherwise have been unrealized for many years. Of course, in many instances national unions are formed which do not take root and die a quick death. But if the national union once takes firm root, its formation is generally followed by a heightened rapidity in the organizing of local unions; and certainly, so long as the organization of labor has been confined to isolated local unions, without any sort of central body, the extension of organization has been neither wide nor rapid.

In the early days of a national union for the purpose of supplying this outside stimulus or leadership which may be necessary for starting a local union, reliance is usually placed upon flying trips by an executive officer of the union or upon the dispatch of a special deputy. With the growth of the union in size and financial strength, the president and the secretary are usually made salaried officers so that they can devote the whole of their attention to union affairs, and in the course of further development the tendency has been to provide for a special class of officers whose principal duty is to organize new local unions. These officers are usually called organizers, although in some cases their official title may be that of vice-president, as with the Molders, or member of the executive board, as in the case of some of the organizers of the United Mine Workers.

The methods employed by the organizer in his work differ according to the nature of the situation with which he has to deal. If the time at his disposal is limited and the workers whom he wishes to organize are numerous and unskilled, he may either post a public notice or station himself at some point where he can meet the workingmen coming from their shops and distribute to them leaflets reciting the advantages of organization and inviting them to be present at a meeting to be held at some specified time and place. If at the appointed time a sufficient number are present, a rousing speech is delivered, and then, if the number signifying their intention to become members is

large enough, an application is filled out for a charter from the central union.

Where the number to be organized is smaller, or where the organizer is less pressed for time, a personal canvass may be made of every man, either at his home or at his shop, before a meeting is finally called.[7] And in some unions, such as the United Mine Workers,[8] the organizer may spend weeks mingling with the men, talking with them, distributing leaflets, stirring up discussion, and generally arousing a union spirit in the community before he is ready to call a meeting at which organization is to be effected.

Nearly all unions have at some time or other in their history made use of organizers. It was but natural, however, that these officers while out upon the road should be called on by the national union at various times to act as adjusters in disputes where the officers of the local unions involved seemed unable to cope with the situation. Gradually this aspect of the organizer's work assumed greater importance, and in some instances it has overshadowed, if not completely crowded out, the work of organizing new local unions. This is what has occurred in the Molders' Union[9] and in the Typographical Union.[10] Then too, the organizer is generally expected to devote some of his time to visiting established local unions, especially those that are weak, encouraging them, instructing them, or, perhaps, as in the case of the Barbers' Union,[11] acting as auditor of their accounts. For these reasons it is impossible to say just what part of the time of an organizer is devoted to the

[7] See, for example, Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, Proceedings, 1899, p. 10; also Iron Molders' Journal, September, 1891, p. 2.

[8] See F. J. Warne, "The Miners' Union," in J. R. Commons, Trade Unionism and Labor Problems, pp. 23, 24.

[9] Interview with John P. Frey, editor, Cincinnati, August 26, 1914.

[10] Proceedings, 1910, p. 7, report of President Lynch. In the Constitution of the Typographical Union, in effect January 1, 1911, art. vi, sec. 8, the name of these officers was changed from "organizers" to "representatives," the name thus being made to correspond more nearly to their actual functions.

[11] Constitution, 1909, secs. 59–65.

actual work of starting new local unions. There is, of course, far less necessity for such work among the long established unions in some of the skilled trades, such as the Molders' Union or the Typographical Union, than there is among poorly organized groups of workers, such as the Textile Workers or the Teamsters. At the present time the employment of paid organizers by national unions is quite general in this country. Of thirty-two typical unions for which data were obtained, all but two pursue this policy to some extent.[12] Of these two, one is the Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association, which has jurisdiction over a trade already strongly organized and which now depends for the starting of new local unions upon members traveling around from one place to another. The other is the Journeymen Horse Shoers' Union. Here, however, the national president occasionally acts as an organizer, and the organizers of the American Federation of Labor assist in the work in the small towns. Doubtless the proportion among all the national unions of the country of those employing paid organizers is much smaller than the above-mentioned figures would indicate. Many of the recently formed national unions are small and financially weak so that the cost of maintaining organizers cannot be afforded. We may safely assert, however, that in the great majority

[12] The thirty unions employing organizers are as follows: Bakery and Confectionery Workers; Barbers; Blacksmiths; Brewery Workmen; Bricklayers; Bridge and Structural Iron Workers; Hod Carriers; Hotel and Restaurant Employees; Iron, Steel and Tin Workers; Lathers (organizers not employed steadily, but only during busy season of the year); Longshoremen; Metal Polishers; United Mine Workers; Molders; Pattern Makers; Pavers, Rammermen, Flag Layers, Bridge and Stone Curb Setters; Photo Engravers; Piano and Organ Workers; Retail Clerks; Sheet Metal Workers; Stove Mounters; Street and Electric Railway Employees; Tailors' Industrial Union; Teamsters; Textile Workers; Typographical Union. In some of these unions, however, as mentioned in the text, the actual amount of organizing work done by the so-called organizers is small. This is true of the organizers of the Brewery Workmen and the Photo Engravers, as well as of those of the Molders and the Typographical Union. In the Molders' Union, however, there are twenty-one or twenty-two Conference Boards. These are district organizations composed of local unions. Each one of these boards maintains as a rule one or two business agents, and these act as organizers.

of trade unions possessing the requisite financial ability the policy of employing paid organizers is firmly established.

The extent to which paid organizers are employed by any particular union will depend upon a number of considerations; for example, the number of employees in the trade or industry, the degree to which they are already organized, the state of their intelligence, the financial resources of the union, and the importance attached by the union to the extension of organization in its particular field. Consequently the number of these officials employed and the money expended for organizing purposes by different unions vary widely. The United Mine Workers employ the greatest force of organizers. In 1907 the number employed during the greater part of the year, including the members of the executive board, was 94.[13] The cost of salaries and expenses for officers and organizers during the year was $169,671.78.[14] No report is given of the number of organizers since then, but the amount of salaries and expenses has gradually increased, so that for the year December 1, 1912–December 1, 1913, it was $290,764.09.[15] Consequently the number of organizers must have increased greatly. Among other unions employing large or fairly large forces of organizers may be mentioned the Brotherhood of Carpenters, with about 50;[16] the Street and Electric Railway Employees, with from 15 to 25;[17] the Bakery and Confectionery Workers, with from 10 to 14;[18] the

[13] Proceedings, 1908, p. 55.

[14] Proceedings, 1908, Report of Secretary, p. 166.

[15] Proceedings, 1914, Report of Secretary, p. 196. In this no distinction is made between the salaries and expenses of organizers and the salaries and expenses of officers. At the convention in 1909, however, it was reported that for the eight months from April to November, inclusive, organizing salaries and expenses had amounted to $106,722.37 (Proceedings, 1909, p. 220). Calculated upon the same basis for the entire year, such salaries and expenses would have amounted to approximately 75 per cent of the total salaries and expenses for the year December 1, 1907–December 1, 1908 ($211,803.84). See report of secretary in Proceedings, 1909.

[16] Interview with President Kirby, Indianapolis, August 28, 1914.

[17] Article by President W. D. Mahon, in American Federationist, July, 1914, p. 550.

[18] Bakers' Journal, March 14, 1914, p. 4, and interview with Treasurer Myrup, Chicago, September 4, 1914.

Barbers, with 5 regular organizers, and at times from 8 to 10;[19] the Pattern Makers, with 5.[20]

Finally, there is the corps of organizers maintained by the American Federation of Labor. The work of these organizers consists in the formation and building up of local unions in trades in which no national union exists, in assisting the national unions in the organizing of their trades or industries whenever possible, and in acting as adjusters for the local unions directly affiliated with the Federation, or for other unions whenever called upon. Since its formation in 1886 the American Federation of Labor has made the promotion and extension of organization one of its principal functions. At the third convention in 1888 President Gompers reported that eighty organizers had given good service during the previous year without pay.[21] In the early years the amount of organizing work done was naturally not great because of the limited resources of the Federation. In the year 1888 only $249.50 was expended for organizing purposes.[22] With the growth of the Federation in membership and power, however, the number of organizers and the expenditures for organizing purposes have gradually increased. The expenditures reached their maximum in 1913 when they amounted to $86,698.94.[23] According to a list[24] published February 12, 1914, the total number of American Federation of Labor organizers was 1709. Most of these were volunteers,[25] but twenty-three were listed as regular salaried officials. In addition a good many more were employed as salaried

[19] Interview with Secretary Fischer, Indianapolis, August 28, 1914.
[20] Proceedings, 1913, p. 14.
[21] Proceedings, 1888, Report of President Gompers.
[22] Ibid., Report of Treasurer.
[23] For the year October 1, 1912, to September 30, 1913 (Proceedings, 1913, p. 39).
[24] List of organizers, American Federation of Labor, February 12, 1914.
[25] Volunteer organizers receive no regular salary. Nevertheless an inducement to exertion is provided by the bonuses which most of the national unions offer to them for the formation of new local unions. These bonuses run all the way from $5 to $25, but average about $10 for a single local union.

organizers for part of the year, so that the total number of paid organizers employed for the whole or a part of the year October 1, 1913–September 30, 1914, was fifty-two.[26] During the same year the total cost for organizers, including salaries and expenses, was $79,713.76.[27]

The work of the American Federation of Labor as an organizing agency is of great importance. After the organizing of a trade has once obtained a good start, and a national union has been formed, it becomes possible, as we have just seen, for an aggressive policy of organizing to be developed, so that after this the formation of new local unions may be given a decided impetus. However, if dependence is placed purely upon the spontaneous germination of the original local unions or upon the sporadic efforts of isolated union enthusiasts, the formation of the first local unions, sufficient in number to constitute a national organization, may prove an extremely long-drawn-out or perhaps quite unrealizable process among certain of the classes of labor which are more difficult to organize. Under circumstances such as these, where an organized portion of a trade cannot be used to propagate unionism among the unorganized portion, it becomes highly desirable, if unionism is to be spread among all classes of workers, that those outside trades which are well organized should lend some assistance in forwarding organization in those trades less favorably circumstanced for the establishment of collective action.

In the Knights of Labor, an organization into which all classes of labor were admitted, this need was provided for not only by a set of organizers whose business it was to organize all kinds of workmen, but also by the formation of mixed local assemblies into which men of various crafts were admitted. In 1872 the original assembly of the Knights of Labor in Philadephia, although composed of skilled garment cutters, initiated a few workmen from other trades with a view to their working for the organization

[26] Proceedings, 1914, p. 41.
[27] Ibid.

of their respective crafts. These members were called "sojourners." As soon as a sufficient number belonging to any one craft had entered the order, a local assembly of that trade was formed under the supervision of a sojourner who transferred his membership to the new assembly. During the following year twenty assemblies were organized in Philadelphia.[28] After this, although many trade assemblies were formed, the mixed assembly was considered the ideal unit of organization.[29] This method of organizing probably accounts in part for the phenomenally rapid growth which the Knights of Labor experienced for a time. In one year, from July, 1885, to July, 1886, the reported membership increased from 111;388[30] to 729,677.[31]

In more recent years this need of assistance from the strongly organized crafts in the work of forming unions in other unorganized crafts has been supplied through the agency of the American Federation of Labor. Through its large corps of organizers, maintained principally by the contributions of national unions, a means is at hand whereby the requisite leadership and stimulus are made available for those workers where provision for these factors cannot be made by a national union in the particular craft concerned. Thus the organizing activities of the Federation become especially valuable among those classes of laborers for whom there is either no national union or whose existing union is too weak to support an adequate organizing policy. Where there is no national union the laborers are organized into local unions affiliated directly with the American Federation of Labor. If there are sufficient members of any one craft, a separate "local trade union" is formed. Where this is not possible, a mixed organization known as a "federal labor union" is formed. In the fourteen years from 1901 to 1914 there were chartered 3619 local trade

[28] C. D. Wright, "An Historical Sketch of the Knights of Labor," in Quarterly Journal of Economics, vol. i, pp. 145–146.
[29] W. Kirk, "National Labor Federations in the United States," in Johns Hopkins University Studies, ser. xxiv, nos. 9–10, p. 32.
[30] Proceedings, Knights of Labor, 1885, p. 174.
[31] Proceedings, 1886, p. 48.

unions and 1700 federal labor unions, affiliated directly with the Federation.[32] On September 30, 1914, there were in existence 570 such unions with a membership of 27,914.[33]

However, not all of the unions representing the difference between the total number organized and the number still in existence in 1914 were disbanded. During this period—1901 to 1914—there were over 1230[34] local unions whose charters were surrendered because they affiliated with national unions of their respective crafts which had been formed. When a sufficient number of local trade unions of any one craft have been formed, the Federation endeavors to unite them in a national organization. In the nineteen years from 1896 to 1914, reports the secretary of the Federation, 75 national organizations have been formed out of directly chartered local unions.[35] It is true that not all of these national organizations have survived, but in 1913 there were still in existence 38 of them with a total membership of over 225,000. Of course not all of this membership is due to the efforts of the American Federation of Labor organizers. Some of these unions now do considerable organizing on their own account. But the Federation is at least responsible for setting in motion the forces which later brought about the results.

In addition to its work of promoting the formation of unions in totally unorganized trades, the Federation is of great assistance to established unions in the extension of their organizations. In 1897 it was reported by the secretary of the Federation that over five hundred applications for local unions had been forwarded by American Federation of Labor organizers to the different affiliated national unions.[36] In 1903 President Gompers stated that two hun-

[32] These figures are based upon the annual reports of the secretary, published in the Proceedings of the American Federation of Labor from 1901 to 1914.

[33] Proceedings, 1914, p. 42, Report of Secretary.

[34] The exact figures, calculated from the reports of the secretary, were 1233. But these did not include the year 1910 in which no statistics were given as to number of charters surrendered by directly affiliated local unions.

[35] Proceedings, 1914, pp. 21–23.

[36] Proceedings, 1897, p. 23.

dred and fifty-four of the Federation organizers reported that they had organized over eleven hundred such local unions.[37] Since this date no reports have been given concerning the number of local unions thus organized for national bodies, but various national unions frequently express their appreciation of the work done by the Federation in the extension of their organization. Thus in October, 1912, the president of the United Textile Workers reported that for the previous ten months the union had been materially assisted in its organizing campaign by the American Federation of Labor, which at one time had as many as six of its regular organizers at the disposal of the Textile Workers.[38] At the convention of this union in the following year it was reported that the Federation had paid fifty dollars per week during the year as part payment for two organizers.[39] Naturally, for strong, firmly established unions, well able to maintain organizing forces of their own, the work of the American Federation of Labor may be of comparatively slight importance, but in the promotion of trade unionism in unorganized branches of industry or the fostering of its growth in weak unions the organizing activities of the Federation are invaluable.

In 1903 there was organized the National Women's Trade Union League, the purpose of which was to extend the organization of women workers. The league is not strictly a labor organization in that non-laboring persons in sympathy with trade unionism are admitted as members. Connected with the national league are eight local leagues in large cities, whose membership must include at least seven women, and whose executive boards must consist of a majority of trade unionists in good standing. National unions, local trade unions, central labor bodies, and state federations of labor may also affiliate. The league endeavors to promote the organization of women wherever possible, and for this purpose sends out organizers from time to time when-

[37] Proceedings, 1903, pp. 29, 30.
[38] Proceedings, 1912, p. 11.
[39] Proceedings, 1913, p. 63.

ever a good opportunity presents itself and finances permit. The principal organizing activities, however, are carried on by the local leagues, several of which, particularly those in Chicago and New York, do considerable work of this kind. The report of the New York League for the year ending March 1, 1911, showed that three organizers had been maintained for a large part of the year at a cost of over $2000.[40] The attempt is also made to secure voluntary help from the general membership. In 1912 a campaign was undertaken by the national league to get financial assistance from various national unions. As a result of this the American Federation of Labor and three national unions each agreed to contribute fifty dollars a month for one year. Several other unions made contributions of about one hundred dollars each.[41] The league has also started in Chicago a school in which to train women to do organizing work. In February, 1914, it was reported that two full-course pupils were in attendance, and that in addition twenty-five or thirty Chicago trade-union women were attending classes dealing with trade-union matters.[42]

In addition to the work of organizers, most national unions depend also upon the distribution of printed matter for the stimulation of organization; and in the case of some of the smaller unions, except for an occasional organizing trip by the president of the union, this may be all the assistance rendered by the national union in this direction. This printed matter is sometimes mailed directly by the central office to non-members whom it is desired to interest in organization, or, when the names and addresses cannot be obtained or the number is too great, the matter is distributed by organizers or members of the union. It consists usually of cards or small leaflets, the contents of which differ, of course, according to the conditions confronting each union. As a rule, however, some or all of the following matters are

[40] Annual Report, Women's Trade Union League of New York, 1910–1911, p. 26.

[41] Proceedings, 1913, Secretary's Report.

[42] Circular letter, February 26, 1914, from S. M. Franklin, Chairman of Publicity.

included: a statement of the conditions in the trade or industry needing remedying; what the union has accomplished in the past; the benefits paid; quotations from the opinions of great statesmen or public men in regard to organized labor, Abraham Lincoln being an especial favorite; finally, an appeal to the non-union man to realize his responsibility and opportunity, and join the union. At times this literature may be accompanied by drawings depicting the wretched and unenviable existence of the non-union man as contrasted with the prosperous and happy life of his union brother.

By some unions a considerable amount of printed matter is distributed. The Barbers reported that in the five years previous to the convention of 1909, 150,000[43] pieces had been sent out, and the Steam Engineers distributed more than that amount in the one year, 1903.[44] Sometimes a union makes use of its journal for the purpose of stimulating interest in organization by sending it gratis to non-union men. The Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees spread abroad in this way during the term September 1, 1907, to September 1, 1909, sixty thousand copies of its monthly journal, The Motorman and Conductor.[45] In 1912 President Gompers reported that, in order to organize the workers in the iron and steel industry, circulars in various foreign languages had been distributed broadcast, and in addition several hundred thousand copies of the Weekly News Letter, with the circulars incorporated therein, were distributed to the English-speaking workmen.[46]

Little reliance is placed by trade unions upon literature alone as a means of bringing about the formation of local unions in unorganized towns, but as an adjunct to the personal work of members or of organizers it may serve a valuable purpose. It may be sent ahead to educate the men and

[43] Proceedings, 1909, p. 46.
[44] A. M. Sakolski, "The Finances of American Trade Unions," in Johns Hopkins University Studies, ser. xxiv, nos. 3–4, p. 108.
[45] Proceedings, 1909, pp. 58, 59.
[46] Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, 1912, p. 29.

set them thinking about trade unionism, thus preparing the way for the visit of the organizer later on; or it may be distributed by the organizer himself and aid him in stimulating the union spirit necessary before a local union can be launched.

The work of the national union as regards the extension of organization is not confined to the starting of new local unions. Organizers are continually visiting established local unions, delivering speeches before them so as to stir up enthusiasm, and at times taking charge of campaigns for an increase of members. Sometimes the national union grants subsidies to the local unions so that those bodies may be able to maintain paid officers to assist in the work of building up the organization. At the convention in 1905 the Teamsters' Union passed a resolution providing that the general president, with the sanction of the general executive board, should have the right to appoint in any city or town where conditions warranted some representative of a local union, who should receive a weekly recompense, not exceeding ten dollars, from the national organization. The local unions were to pay a proportionate share of the expense.[47] The general executive board of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees reported in 1907 that it had put into operation a plan of employing local special organizers, the national union paying at the rate of fifteen dollars per week and the local union appropriating whatever it could afford in order to make the work of the organizer effective.[48] In the Molders' Union there are twenty-one or twenty-two Conference Boards, which are district organizations composed of the local unions within each district. Each of these boards maintains one or two business agents, who also act as organizers.[49] For the support of these agents the boards receive a subsidy from the national union of five cents per capita per month and such additional sums as the president and executive board may deem necessary.[50] In 1913

[47] Proceedings, 1905, p. 100.
[48] Proceedings, 1907, p. 73.
[49] Interview with Editor John P. Frey, Cincinnati, August 26, 1914.
[50] Constitution, 1912, art. xx, sec. 6.

the president of the Pattern Makers reported that two of the local unions were receiving support in maintaining business agents.[51] The secretary of the Metal Polishers and Brass Workers stated that that union helps to pay expenses of business agents in five cities.[52] In 1911 it was reported by the president of the Machinists that the grand lodge had paid during the year fifty per cent of the salaries and expenses of fifty-one local business agents.[53]

But, although a national union will thus give its aid to the local unions in the work of building up their membership, the growth and prosperity of these unions must depend for the most part upon their own efforts. The statement is often made by trade-union leaders that every member ought to consider himself an organizer. To the great majority of unionists it is probable that this injunction conveys slight sense of obligation. A large percentage of the local unions that are started quickly break up simply for lack of interest on the part of members, and some unions report that local unions are constantly appealing for aid from the national body in the work of building up their organizations.[54] Nevertheless, there are members who, either because of a strong faith in the possibilities of organized labor and a burning zeal for its advancement, or because of a less altruistic ambition that they themselves may attain some distinction, local or national, as labor leaders, devote their spare time and excess energy to the work of influencing their fellow workmen to join the union. A great part of the work of building up the membership of local unions must be done by unionists with more or less of this spirit. Moreover, in course of time, as the local union grows in size, or probably even at the beginning if it is large, the conduct of its affairs is no longer left altogether to gratui-

[51] Proceedings, 1913, p. 14.

[52] Interview with Secretary Charles R. Atherton, Cincinnati, August 27, 1914.

[53] Machinists' Monthly Journal, October, 1911, p. 97.

[54] For example, see Teamsters, Proceedings, 1905, p. 15, Report of the President; Bakers, Proceedings of the fifth session of the general executive board, in Bakers' Journal, April 17, 1909, p. 3.

tous efforts, but provision is made for a business agent who is paid for full or part time and who, among other things, is expected to endeavor to bring into the union the unorganized members of the craft.

Within recent years a number of unions have at times waged joint organizing campaigns. Some of these campaigns have been confined to particular industries. Thus in 1910 and 1911 the various unions belonging to the Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor made a concerted effort to organize the metal trades of Los Angeles. A similar attempt was made in Erie in 1913. The building trades likewise have waged such campaigns, one of the most important being that at Los Angeles in 1913. The Railroad Employees Department of the American Federation of Labor also reported in 1914 that, with the cooperation of the affiliated organizations, it had been conducting a campaign of organizing work for several months and that much success had been met with.[55] The plan in these campaigns has been for organizers in the various affiliated unions to work together, to concentrate their efforts upon one point so that a more enthusiastic union atmosphere may be created among the men than could be brought about by the efforts of a single organizer, and so that the unions through their combination may stand in a more advantageous position in overcoming the opposition of the employers than they would singly.

On April 21, 1912, patterning after certain movements which had just been conducted for the purpose of increasing men's interest in religion, there was inaugurated in the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul what was known as a Labor Forward Movement. This movement was a general campaign by organized labor in the two cities for the furtherance of trade unionism. It lasted until May 4. District meetings were held in all parts of the cities, sometimes mass-meetings and sometimes of single trades. Ex-

[55] Report of Secretary-treasurer Scott of Railroad Employees Department, American Federation of Labor, in Proceedings, 1914, p. 190.

penses were cut down by using school buildings, churches, and municipal halls rent free. There was close cooperation with the churches, and on one Sunday evening, it is stated, twenty-two pulpits were occupied at evening meetings by representative labor men.

Mr. Gompers speaks of the purposes, methods, and accomplishments of the movement as follows:

> The aim of the campaign was threefold: to increase the numerical strength of the trade union movement; to serve a 'revival' function by arousing the members to renewed and increased activity and zeal and by developing a more militant enthusiasm; to disseminate more widely information of the principles of unionism among citizens. How well they succeeded may be judged from the following: Forty national representatives from all parts of the country were in Minneapolis. From five to ten daily meetings were held in various parts of the city, in public assembly halls, churches, the Y. M. C. A. Building, the court house, school houses, [and] trade union rooms. That six unions were formed in Minneapolis alone as the direct result of the campaign is the statement of E. G. Hall, President of the State Federation of Labor. The success of the educational end may be gauged by the scope of the discussions and the wide range of people reached. Trade union principles were presented to individual locals, to mass meetings of locals, to general audiences in schools and churches, to fraternal organizations, to the Young Men's Christian Association, to men's clubs, the Neighborhood Civic Club, etc. Some of the topics discussed before large audiences were: the union shop vs. the non-union shop; women and child labor; organized labor, its struggles; what does union labor want; the trade unions of to-day; convict labor; the union label; compulsory and industrial education; the shorter workday; wages and morality; health, safety and sanitation in factories; compensation to workmen for injuries received in employment.[56]

Since this initial attempt similar movements have been set on foot in many other cities of the country. In 1913 it was reported that movements had been instituted in Syracuse, Auburn, and Brooklyn, New York, and in Pittsburgh, and that a movement was in progress in New York City.[57] In 1914 some half dozen other cities are mentioned as having conducted such campaigns, the principal one having been waged in Philadelphia, where the convention of the American Federation of Labor was held that year. The conduct of the movement in this city illustrates the use of the methods which have been described for the stimulation of

[56] American Federationist, October, 1912, p. 828.
[57] Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, 1913, p. 91.

interest in trade unionism. The president and the secretary of the American Federation of Labor assisted in the movement and appointed organizers to cooperate; practically every international union had organizers helping in the work; and literature was distributed at all the mass-meetings. It is reported that large numbers of previously unorganized workers were added to the union as a result of the campaign.[58]

The results accomplished by a Labor Forward Movement in Canton, Ohio, illustrate the effectiveness of this means of promoting organization. The following gains in consequence of the campaign are reported thus: The membership of the Carpenters increased from 108 to 325; that of the Bartenders, from 53 to 107; that of the Painters and Decorators, from 10 to 137; and the Plumbers and Plasterers both brought theirs up to 100 per cent. The following new unions were formed: the Teamsters with 325 members, the Retail Clerks with 127, the Bakers with 50, and the Building Laborers with 70. A Building Trades Council was also organized. Improvements in conditions generally showed the effectiveness of the campaign.[59]

Great hopes are placed in the possibilities of these movements by the officers of the American Federation of Labor. "Nothing," they say, "can continue to exist without food, nourishment. The paramount importance of planning for the work of organization is beyond dispute. In addition to the regular methods there must be special endeavors to arouse enthusiasm and to renew desire to work for the extension of the movement. For this purpose the Rochester Convention [1912] of the A. F. of L. approved and urged the systematic extension of a Labor Forward Movement. The Labor Forward Movement proceeds along the most effective line—it creates ideals and furnishes opportunities for immediately giving them practical reality."[60]

The methods for overcoming the ignorance and indiffer-

[58] Proceedings, 1914, p. 60.
[59] Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, 1914, p. 60.
[60] Ibid.

ence of the workmen which have so far been described are of a more or less educational nature. Education, however, is often a slow process. Some of the workmen may be too indifferent to place themselves in the way of influence by the educational propaganda, that is, to read the union literature or attend the union mass-meetings. Others, while believing in a general way that the union is a good thing for the working man, cannot be induced to take the definite step of allying themselves with it, thus subjecting themselves to the obligation of paying dues where there is no prospect of immediate gain. Others again, while favorably inclined toward trade unionism, may be hesitant about affiliation for fear that their standing with their employers may be prejudiced thereby. Still others, though the number of these is probably not large, may be actually hostile to organization. Now, in the case of the first three classes of workmen just mentioned, the policy of education in the general principles of trade unionism and the benefits to be obtained thereby is inadequate if quick and visible results are to be obtained. In order to overcome such difficulties it is necessary that there be presented before these kinds of non-unionists a concrete issue demanding a definite stand by them either for or against the union. Such an issue is drawn by the declaration of a strike.

Once a strike has been declared, it follows that every workman who is not for the union is against it. This does not mean that every man, from the standpoint of good trade unionism, is morally bound to affiliate with the organization conducting the strike. If the policy of the union is unworthy of support, or if the prospects of success are altogether hopeless, he may be quite justified in being against that particular union in that particular strike. Therefore the problem of organizing does not reduce itself to such a simple formula as the mere calling of a strike. A handful of union men in a large factory cannot always effect organization therein by the easy device of declaring a strike, quitting work, and expecting several hundred non-

union fellow-workmen to follow them. The calling of a strike by some half dozen malcontents or over-enthusiastic unionists in a plant where conditions are already satisfactory to the great majority of the workers would be fool-hardy. Equally futile would be the calling by a small poverty stricken union, unsupported by other unions, of a strike against, for instance, one of the plants of the United States Steel Corporation. But if there is real discontent among the workers, if this is capable of formulation into a concrete and definite statement of grievances, and if there is a reasonable prospect of success in obtaining all or a part of the demands made, the calling of a strike, since it compels the taking of a positive stand either for or against the union, may well be the means of converting indifference into personal interest and lethargy into active participation.

Under such circumstances, the indifferent non-union man, dissatisfied with present conditions, and seeing an opportunity for definite and immediate improvements in these conditions, and confronted, moreover, in case he continues at work, with the prospect of ostracism on the part of the great mass of his fellow-employees, will probably prefer to throw in his lot with the strikers and affiliate with the union. Thus under the stimulus provided by a concrete issue and under the influence of a sort of mob psychology, there is brought about at a stroke what months of mere agitation and persuasion might seek vainly to accomplish.

It is probably true that in all unions the strike has at some time or other served as a means of increasing membership, and in certain unions it has been regularly employed as an organizing device. Some examples will serve to illustrate how the strike has been useful as a means of bringing workmen into the union.

Early in the year 1887 a Carpenters' Council was formed in Chicago, which was made up of the various unions and assemblies of the Knights of Labor composed of carpenters. When the council was organized, only about twenty-five per cent of the carpenters in the city were union men.

Wages ranged from seventeen to twenty-five cents an hour. The workday was never less than ten hours and sometimes twelve or more. The council determined to ask for an eight-hour day and a minimum scale of thirty-five cents an hour. The boss carpenters refused to grant the request, and the council ordered a strike of all the carpenters in the city. It is asserted that more than ninety per cent of the working carpenters in the city, union and non-union, laid down their tools and walked out. The initiation fee of the union was reduced to one dollar, and non-union strikers "fell over each other clambering into the organization." At the end of two weeks, it is stated, a complete victory for the strikers had been achieved, and the trade in the city was organized as never before.[61]

Among the textile workers we find a fair number of instances where the conditions existing and the state of mind engendered during a strike have been taken advantage of by the union as an opportune time for effecting organization. In July, 1907, there occurred a strike of some four or five thousand silk workers in Scranton, Pennsylvania. All of the strikers were girls, some of them very young, and there was little organization. The United Textile Workers sent to the scene an organizer, who reported that he succeeded in organizing nineteen local unions.[62] In 1912 occurred the big strike of the textile workers in Lawrence. The secretary of the United Textile Workers declared that the publicity given to this strike was the means by which the Textile Workers of the country became aroused, and that it resulted in additions to the ranks of the union that could have been secured in no other way.[63] One of the organizers reported that as a result of this strike four new unions were formed, the reaffiliation of a seceded union was secured, and the organization of a textile council was effected. In 1910 there was a big strike of about six thousand street-railway men in Philadelphia, and with them, it

[61] Buchanan, pp. 351–354.
[62] Proceedings, 1907, pp. 31, 41, 42.
[63] Proceedings, 1912, p. 21.

is reported, about one hundred thousand other wage earners went out on sympathetic strikes. Among these President Golden estimated that there were from forty-five to fifty thousand textile workers. Public opinion, he said, ran high in favor of the men on strike, and every effort was made to take advantage of the unique situation. Meetings were held in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, and it was no uncommon thing to fill the large meeting hall of the Kensington Labor Lyceum to overflowing with from three to four thousand textile workers, giving, he said, a splendid opportunity to preach the gospel of trade unionism to thousands of wage workers, who never could have been reached except for extraordinary conditions. Some of the existing unions began to build up rapidly, seven new unions were added, and a textile council was formed of unions affiliated with the United Textile Workers.[64]

The affiliation of garment workers with the union has been brought about to a large extent during strikes. In October, 1901, there was a strike of about twenty-five hundred tailors in Boston. It lasted a week, and resulted in an increase of from twelve to fifteen per cent in wages and a shortening of the working-day to nine hours. Secretary White of the United Garment Workers reported that the strike led to the thorough organization of the trade.[65] In August, 1909, a strike occurred in New York City involving some eight thousand coat tailors, most of them in unorganized shops. The local unions of the United Garment Workers took charge of the strike, which lasted for two weeks. At its termination, settlements were made with over two hundred and fifty contractors, and the union secured over five thousand new members.[66] In the latter part of 1910 and the early part of 1911 there took place a great strike among the garment workers in Chicago. The strike began with the firm of Hart, Schaffner, and Marx, and soon

[64] Proceedings, United Textile Workers, 1910, pp. 67–69, Report of President Golden as Organizer.

[65] Report of Secretary White to the eleventh convention, United Garment Workers, in The Garment Worker, August, 1902, p. 11.

[66] Report of President Rickert, in Proceedings, 1910, pp. 25, 26.

included practically all their employees, about ten thousand. It also spread to other factories until the total number of people involved amounted to about forty-five thousand. At the beginning of the strike nearly all of these were unorganized, but during the course of the strike great numbers joined the union.[67] The local union of cutters and trimmers reported that its membership increased from one hundred and forty to nineteen hundred.[68] In 1912 the District Council of St. Louis reported the successful termination of a twenty-five months' struggle with the Marx and Haas Clothing Company of that city. The report says: "Before the Marx and Haas victory, our membership in the clothing trade was practically nothing, hardly a quorum could be mustered together at the local meetings, but since this fight has been won, we have added almost a thousand members to our rolls, and the meetings of the locals are well attended and full of life."[69] It has been asserted that very few of the members of the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union have joined except when ready to strike. "Ninety per cent. of our members have joined the organization on the eve of a general strike. The workman joins the union to enable him to strike and make the strike effective."[70]

In the coal-mining industry, likewise, strikes have been the means of bringing many new members into the organization. In 1897, in view of the fact that there was a rising market, a strike to obtain an advance in wages was ordered for July 4. At the time there were less than ten thousand members in the union. The order was obeyed, however, by over one hundred thousand men, and there was a general suspension in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. A compromise was effected on September 3, on an average advance of twenty per cent.[71] The results of this strike in adding to the membership of the union may be judged from the fact that, while at its inception, as

[67] Report of President Rickert, in Proceedings, 1912, pp. 22–32.
[68] Proceedings, 1912, p. 277.
[69] Ibid., p. 336.
[70] The Ladies' Garment Worker, February, 1914, p. 19, editorial.
[71] F. J. Warne, The Coal-Mine Workers, pp. 217–219.

stated, the membership was less than ten thousand, the average paid-up membership reported for the year 1897 was nearly forty thousand.[72] Another instance in the coal-mining industry is the case of the great anthracite strike in 1902. In December, 1902, the paid-up membership in the three anthracite districts was a little over thirty-two thousand. The year following it was over sixty-two thousand.[73] After this until 1912 the membership of the United Mine Workers in the anthracite fields fluctuated considerably, the men coming into the union when trouble threatened, but dropping out again as soon as an agreement was concluded. At a convention of the anthracite districts held in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, November 3, 1911, the anthracite miners formulated a set of demands. The operators refused to accede, and consequently a suspension of work was ordered, beginning April 1, 1912. President White reported that this suspension order was obeyed unanimously by the mine workers irrespective of whether they were affiliated with the union or not, and that the tie-up in the anthracite mining industry was complete. An agreement with the operators was finally ratified at a tri-district convention on May 14.[74] In December, 1911, before the beginning of the strike, the paid-up membership in the three anthracite districts was 20,398. In December, 1912, after the strike, the paid-up membership in the same districts was 90,517.[75]

It is evident, then, that a strike has frequently been the channel through which has come a large influx of new members into the union. It is true that in many cases this increase in membership is not permanent. That, however, presents a problem in holding the membership of the union intact and will be considered in a later chapter. But as a means of bringing in new members it is clear that the strike may at times prove valuable. The limitations on its use and the positive dangers sometimes accompanying it should,

[72] Proceedings, United Mine Workers, 1910, p. 116.
[73] Proceedings, 1903, 1904, Reports of the Secretary.
[74] Proceedings, 1914, Report of President White.
[75] Ibid., Report of Secretary William Green.

however, be clearly recognized. If the strike is to be successful as an organizing device, not only must there be no failure of any considerable portion of the workmen to obey the strike order, but there should also be some gain to the men brought about as a result of the strike. For while, as we have seen, successful strike movements have often been the means of building up the membership of a union, on the other hand unsuccessful strikes have frequently resulted in the wrecking or at least weakening of existing organizations. A few important examples will serve to illustrate the truth of this assertion.

We have seen how the United Mine Workers were able upon several occasions to increase their membership as a result of successful strike movements. In 1894, however, during the industrial depression then prevailing, there was an attempt, through the calling of a strike, to prevent a reduction in wages. Although at the time the organization had only about thirteen thousand paid-up members, the strike call was obeyed by nearly one hundred and twenty-five thousand mine workers, and at the end of eight weeks the number was increased to about one hundred and eighty thousand. The settlement at the time was regarded as a compromise, but as a result the union was almost destroyed, emerging from the strike with barely eight thousand members.[76]

The Iron, Steel and Tin Workers likewise provide conspicuous examples of the disorganizing effects of unsuccessful strikes as well as the constructive results of successful ones. In 1889 there was a successful strike against Carnegie, Phipps, and Company at their Homestead plant. In the two years following the union showed a growth from something over sixteen thousand to a little over twenty-four thousand.[77] In 1882, however, there was a strike, lasting four months, for an increase in wages. It was a complete

[76] Warne, The Coal-Mine Workers, pp. 217–219.

[77] Report on Conditions of Employment in the Iron and Steel Industry in the United States, vol. iii, S. Doc. No. 110, 62d Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 114–115.

failure, and as a result the membership fell from sixteen thousand in 1882 to eleven thousand eight hundred in 1883.[78] In 1892 there was another strike against Carnegie Brothers and Company at Homestead. At the end of a five months' struggle the workmen lost all that they had demanded, and there was a decline in the membership of the union from 20,975 in 1892 to 13,613 in 1893.[79]

The experience of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen shows vividly the disastrous results that may follow an unsuccessful strike. During the two or three years previous to 1904 this union had succeeded in building up a strong organization among the workers in the packing houses of Chicago. In that year a demand was made for certain increases in wages and the employees were called out on strike. After being out for ten days the men again reported for work, an agreement having been reached to submit the matter to arbitration. An hour or two later, however, they were again ordered out, it being charged that the packers were guilty of unfair discrimination. The strike then dragged on for a number of weeks, ending in the complete defeat of the strikers.[80] As a result the membership of the union fell from 34,400 in 1904 to 6200 in 1905.[81]

The membership of the Teamsters' Union has suffered frequently as a result of unwise sympathetic strikes. The most noteworthy instance is that of the great strike in Chicago in March, 1905, when the teamsters went out in sympathy with the garment workers. The unions were defeated upon this occasion, and the membership of the Teamsters suffered severely.[82] For the year July 1, 1904, to July 1, 1905, the secretary reported a decrease of nearly ten thousand.[83]

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[78] Ibid., p. 138.
[79] Ibid., pp. 115, 116.
[80] Report of Immigration Commission, Vol. 13, Part II, S. Doc. No. 633, 61st Cong., 3d Sess., pp. 90–93. See also Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, Proceedings, 1906, p. 12.
[81] As reported to the American Federation of Labor. See Proceedings, 1911, p. 87.
[82] Proceedings, 1905, Report of President Shea, p. 18.
[83] Ibid., Report of Secretary-treasurer Turley.

These examples, exhibiting both the favorable and the unfavorable results of strike movements, lead to the conclusion that their advisability as an organizing device depends wholly upon circumstances. This aspect of the matter was clearly brought out by Mr. Mitchell in a discussion at the convention of the United Mine Workers in 1907. Vice-President Lewis in his report at this convention condemned the policy which had been pursued in 1906 after the failure of the union to reach an interstate agreement with the operators in the Central Competitive Field such as had been concluded for several years previous. The policy referred to was that of making agreements with the operators in sections, instead of waiting until a single agreement with all the operators in that field could be concluded. Mr. Lewis thought that upon this occasion there should have been a national strike movement, and that this would have been the means of organizing Central Pennsylvania, the Irwin and Connellsville districts of Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, Alabama, and Colorado.[84] He pointed to the successful results of other national strikes, such as those of 1897 and 1902, which have been described, and declared, "When we organize West Virginia, when we organize the unorganized sections of Pennsylvania, we will organize them by a strike movement."[85] In reply, President Mitchell called attention to the fact that there was a decided falling off in the membership of the organization after the strike of 1894, and asserted that no one definite policy could be pursued by a labor organization under all circumstances, and that under the circumstances prevailing at the time of the settlement—in the most important districts of the Central Competitive Field the miners were rent in factions—the wisest course was pursued, that is, the making of sectional agreements.[86] He said that he had repeatedly stated that, in his opinion, West Virginia, the Irwin field, the Connellsville coke region, Southern Colorado, and the Georges Creek district

[84] Proceedings, 1907, pp. 59, 60.
[85] Ibid., p. 282.
[86] Ibid., pp. 276, 277.

would not be thoroughly organized except as the result of a successful strike, and continued: "I repeat that opinion now; but I want to add to it that they will not be organized at all, strike or no strike, unless we are able to support the men in those fields from the first day they lay down their tools. One year ago that was a consideration with me. I didn't believe they would have struck then, I don't believe it now, and if they had struck you would have had no money to support them and no resources from which to draw revenue, because when the union men were on strike you had cut off the only source of revenue."[87]

In the case of some non-unionists the personal persuasion of enthusiastic unionist fellow-workmen, the efforts of paid business agents, the stirring appeals of regular organizers, the arguments presented in trade-union literature, and perhaps the psychological state engendered during a strike may all be insufficient to lead to an actual affiliation with the union. As a means of bringing such workmen into the organization unions make use of the devices of the closed shop, the boycott, and the union label.[88]

A closed shop, as generally understood in trade-union discussion, may be defined as a shop in which only members of the union claiming jurisdiction are allowed to retain employment. There are, however, two aspects of the closed shop as employed by trade unions. On the one hand, it may mean simply that in certain shops designated as closed no non-union workmen may be employed. On the other hand, the closed-shop rule as enforced by some unions may require in addition that union members refuse to work in all shops where non-unionists are employed. The utility of the simpler form of the closed-shop device as a means of bringing new members into the union is not open to question. A hypothetical case will make this clear. A union has succeeded by means of education and personal appeal in enrolling in the organization seventy-five per cent of the workers in a certain shop. The other twenty-five per cent, however,

[87] Proceedings, 1907, p. 310.
[88] For other uses of these devices see Chapters II and III.

are not immediately amenable to these influences and do not affiliate. Now if the union, either through threat of a strike or through peaceful persuasion, is able to induce the employer to agree that he will employ only union men, it is evident that the strongest possible incentive—the fear of losing their jobs—is provided for causing the affiliation of the unorganized twenty-five per cent. As a matter of fact such a procedure is the method ordinarily employed in unionizing a shop.[89]

When the implication of the closed shop is extended, however, so as to require the refusal of unionists to work in any shop where non-unionists are employed, the utility of the device as a means of extending organization is open to question. The explanation of this has been clearly set forth by Professor Barnett:

> If a local union controls a large part of the labor supply, the influence of the closed shop rule as a means of increasing the membership may be very considerable. If, for example, in a community where 500 printers are employed, 400 are members of the union, both the non-unionist workmen and their employers will be at a distinct disadvantage. A non-unionist workman, if he can earn the minimum rate, will be eager to secure access to the wider opportunities for employment which the unionist possesses. The non-union employer under such circumstances cannot discharge his workmen and thus reduce expenses so readily in times when business is slack as he otherwise would, for he cannot easily replace his employees from his restricted labor market. At times, for the same reason, he must go outside his home labor market, at expense and inconvenience, to supply himself with printers. But just as the closed shop rule is a powerful instrument for unionizing offices and recruiting members when the union is strong and controls a great part of the labor supply, so it is a hindrance when the union is weak. The unionist and the employer of unionists suffer in this case under the same disadvantage of a restricted labor market as non-unionists and the non-union employer do when the union is strong.[90]

It is evident, then, that the closed-shop rule as applied in the narrower sense, that is, the closing of certain designated shops to non-unionists, is a valuable organizing device for all unions; while the closed-shop rule in its wider sense,

[89] F. T. Stockton, "The Closed Shop in American Trade Unions," in Johns Hopkins University Studies, ser. xxix, no. 3, p. 126.

[90] G. E. Barnett, "The Printers: A Study in American Trade Unionism," in American Economic Association Quarterly, third series, vol. x, no. 3, pp. 290–291.

that is, the requirement that unionists refrain from working with non-unionists in any shop, is useful or detrimental as a means of extending organization according as the union is comparatively strong or weak in the locality where the attempt to apply the rule is made. Consequently we find that while the closed-shop rule in the former sense is applied—with certain notable exceptions,[91] it is true—by practically all unions whenever possible, in the latter sense it is applied only by unions that have their trades comparatively well organized;[92] even in such unions the rule is often relaxed, and under certain conditions members are allowed to work for non-union employers.[93]

Since the closed shop is useful in inducing unorganized workers to join the union only under the circumstances just described, a different device is sometimes found necessary when other methods of organizing have proved ineffective. Such a device is found in the boycott. Thus a recent writer upon the boycott states that "the argument often advanced by the carpenters to justify their boycott of non-union trim is that the women and children working in the wood mills cannot, because of their ignorance and indifference, be organized into effective labor organizations that could be expected to strike for improved working conditions and higher wages."[94] This device does not act directly upon the worker, but indirectly through the employer. The latter finds his sales reduced as a result of the boycott. Unless he possesses sufficient resources to enable him to stand this loss of business and to fight the union in the courts, he will prefer to unionize his factory and thus restore the market for his goods. In this way the Carpenters by refusing to

[91] The most important exceptions are the four railroad brotherhoods, the Engineers, the Firemen, the Conductors, and the Trainmen. Other unions not making use of the closed shop are the Railroad Telegraphers, the Maintenance of Way Employees, the Switchmen, the Car Workers, the Masters, Mates and Pilots, the Post Office Clerks, the Letter Carriers, the Steel Plate Transferers, and the Stationary Engineers (Stockton, p. 31).

[92] Ibid., p. 128.

[93] Ibid., pp. 32, 152.

[94] L. Wolman, "The Boycott in American Trade Unions," in Johns Hopkins University Studies, ser. xxxiv, no. 1, p. 21.

work on non-union trim have found the boycott a most powerful instrument for organizing the mill workers of New York State. "By 1908, twelve years after the inception of the boycott, 189 of the 230 woodworking mills in New York City had been organized, and in 1910 Vice-President Quinn reported the organization of 40 more."[95]

Very similar to the boycott as a device for bringing about the organization of groups of workers otherwise hard to reach is the union label, which likewise acts upon the employer and indirectly through him upon the employee. The only difference is that in this case, instead of requesting that all unionists and union sympathizers refuse to purchase the products of certain specified "unfair" employers, the labor organization urges that only those goods be purchased which bear a union label as a guarantee of the fact that they are the product of organized labor. Probably the most conspicuous example of the efficacy of this device is to be found in the United Garment Workers. At the convention of 1900 a delegate from Brattleboro, Vermont, presented a report in the following terms: "A little less than a year ago the firm, having a demand for union-made garments, presented to the employees the importance of becoming organized. As the result a meeting was called October 7, 1899, for the purpose of instituting a local union."[96] The label has been especially important in furthering the organization of the overall workers. Overalls are largely used by wage-earners, especially in the building trades, which are among the best organized of industries, and consequently failure to use the label might result in a considerable restriction of the market for the goods of non-union manufacturers. The label was first adopted by two large firms whose success led other firms to adopt it until it was eventually taken up by almost all the firms in the overalls industry. Andrews and Bliss in their "History of Women in Trade Unions" state that in many cases unions have been formed on the initiative of the employer, who wished to use the label

[95] Wolman, The Boycott in American Trade Unions, pp. 50–51.
[96] Report of the Industrial Commission, 1901, vol. xvii, p. 63.

and therefore induced, or perhaps compelled, his employees to organize.[97] In 1903 Secretary White gave warning that this manner of organizing might be carried too far, and that there was danger lest the label create a sort of unionism that depends upon the employer's profiting by the union, rather than unionism based upon the independent action of wage earners who appreciate the advantages of united effort.[98]

To summarize, it may be said that the coming together of workingmen to form labor organizations is not altogether spontaneous, but that, generally speaking, outside stimulus and leadership are necessary. With the development of national unions and the employment of regular organizers, agencies have been provided whereby these factors are supplied for particular trades. Moreover, with the rise of the American Federation of Labor it has been possible to extend the operations of systematic organizing so as to promote and foster organization in occupations hitherto totally unorganized and to assist unions that are too weak to support adequate organizing policies of their own. The systemization of organizing activities is still further displayed in the joint organizing campaigns carried on by the unions connected with some of the departments of the American Federation of Labor and in the labor forward movements which in the last three or four years have been conducted in various cities. Although it is true that, after the establishment of a local union, its growth or decline is largely dependent upon the activity, enthusiasm, and good judgment of its unpaid officers and individual members, nevertheless, even here the tendency is for the local union, whenever able, to provide special paid officers, one of whose functions is to bring into the union the unorganized persons in the craft; in order to carry out this policy, the local union is sometimes subsidized by its national body. It has been shown that frequently the most expeditious method of supplying the

[97] S. Doc. No. 645, 61st Cong., 2d Sess., pp. 168–169.
[98] Proceedings, United Garment Workers, 1903, p. 16, in The Garment Worker, August, 1903.

requisite stimulus for organization is by calling a strike or taking advantage of the spontaneous outbreak of one, and that in this way the affiliation of large numbers of previously unorganized workers has been secured. Finally, in case the methods of education and peaceful persuasion seem hopeless or too dilatory for bringing into the union certain classes of workers, there remain for the union several devices—the closed shop, the boycott, and the union label—through the use of which at times membership in the union is practically made compulsory.

## CHAPTER II

### Overcoming Employer's Opposition

Probably the greatest obstacle to the organization of labor, however, is not the ignorance or indifference of the workmen themselves, but the opposition of employers. It is clear that if an employer is hostile to the organization of his working force and threatens the discharge of any employee joining a union, the very existence of the union must be kept secret, at least until a considerable membership has been recruited, and during this time nothing can be accomplished in the way of improving conditions. Obviously, organization cannot proceed far under such circumstances. Moreover, the greater the power of a union to force from an employer compliance with its demands, the stronger is the claim which it can make for increased and more loyal membership. Men would not continue to pay dues to an organization from which no visible results were forthcoming. As a means of combatting this opposition of the employer, unions make use of many means of pressure, the most important of which are the strike, the sympathetic strike, the boycott, the union label, the closed shop, and the entrance into competition with the employer. Each of these forms of pressure will now be considered.

*The Strike.*—The strike is at once the most widely used and the most fundamental means of pressure employed by unions. It might almost be said to be the characteristic feature of trade unionism. The strike as a means of reaching the ignorant or arousing the indifferent non-unionist has already been discussed. Concerning its general utility as a method of overcoming the opposition of employers no comment is necessary. This is a matter of common knowledge, and is amply evidenced by its constant and widespread use

and its frequently successful conclusion. The strike is of course used for the enforcement of all the demands which a union has to make upon an employer, such as those for an increase of wages or a shortening of hours, as well as for purposes of organizing, such as the prevention of discrimination against unionists, the compelling of recognition of the union, or the enforcement of the closed shop. But, inasmuch as the success and prosperous existence of a union depend largely upon its ability to enforce its demands, and its ability to enforce these demands is to a great extent dependent upon its capacity for carrying a strike to a satisfactory conclusion, a discussion of the conditions under which a strike can be most successfully conducted becomes pertinent to our inquiry concerning the organizability of labor.

A number of factors, of course, affect the success of unions in conducting strikes. Thus there is, as far as the union is concerned, the matter of the management of the union and of its financial strength; and, as far as the employer is concerned, leaving out of account the personal factor of his own obduracy, there is the question of his ability to have his work performed at some other plant than the one which has been struck (as in the case of trusts), or the ease with which he can find other workers to take the places of the strikers. Finally, there is the matter of public opinion affecting both employer and union. However, since these factors are all discussed in other connections, it is necessary only to mention them here. One other important factor, however, which is not considered elsewhere, deserves attention at this place, namely, the necessity under which the employer labors of coming to a quick settlement with his workmen.

If the continuance of a strike is more or less a matter of indifference to the employer, the prospects of its success are small. If an employer is hostile to the union, the force which brings him to a settlement with the union is either fear of loss or the pressure of public opinion. Therefore the better a union is situated in regard to its ability to bring

these forces to bear upon the employer in obtaining its demands, the greater are its opportunities for overcoming those obstacles to organization which we have summed up in the phrase, the opposition of the employer. It is for this reason that a union will generally endeavor to strike during the busy season, so that the employer's fear of loss of business will make him more amenable to the pressure of the union. Similarly, it is for this reason that there are more successful strikes during periods of prosperity, when business is booming and profits are large, than during periods of depression, when the stoppage of the employer's plant may mean little loss or even some gain to him. This point will be discussed later in more detail.

From the statistics of strikes in the United States from 1881 to 1905 it appears that there are certain industries in which it is particularly necessary for employers to make a quick settlement with strikers. In the table below are shown those industries in which forty per cent or more of the strikes were successful[1] and in which the average time each establishment was closed was fifteen days or less.

TABLE I

SUCCESS AND DURATION OF STRIKES IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES 1881–1905

| Industry | Per cent of establishments in which strike succeeded[3] | Average days closed per establishment[4] |
|---|---|---|
| Bakery | 61.44 | 4.7 |
| Blacksmithing and horseshoeing | 86.74 | 3.1 |
| Building trades | 52.47 | 14.5 |
| Clothing, men's | 75.51 | 11.4 |
| Clothing, women's | 66.37 | 10.3 |
| Furnishing goods, men's | 75.34 | 14.3 |
| Hats and caps | 44.00 | 9.0 |
| Printing and publishing | 45.01 | 6.8 |
| Street railway transportation | 41.13 | 3.7 |
| Tin and sheet metal goods | 50.61 | 13.8 |

[1] The unsuccessful strikes were not considered, because in such cases the short duration of the strike was due to the weakness rather than to the strength of the union.

[2] Certain industries in which the total number of strikes was very small are not included in this table.

[3] Twenty-first Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1906, pp. 81–82.

[4] Ibid., pp. 49–50.

It will be noticed that four of these industries—baking, blacksmithing and horseshoeing, printing and publishing, and street-railway transportation—furnish services or commodities which must be supplied to consumers regularly at very short intervals,—daily, for instance, in the case of bread, newspapers, and street-railway transportation. Obviously the demands of customers compel employers in such industries to see to it that their establishments are opened up as quickly as possible. In four more of the industries—men's clothing, women's clothing, men's furnishing goods, and hats and caps—there occur each year or season a few weeks of great rush, when employers are particularly anxious to keep their factories going; and the workmen, by taking advantage of this fact and striking at such periods, are often able to obtain quick concessions. In the building industry there are several reasons which make employers anxious to keep their work going. In the first place, it is frequently the case that a bonus is offered if the work is completed within a certain minimum time. On the other hand, "nearly all general contractors and many sub-contractors are required by their agreements to have their work finished within a specified time under penalty of a fine for each day beyond this time."[5] It is true that most contracts stipulate that this provision shall not apply in case of delays on account of labor disputes; but it is probable that a contractor would not want to be behind the specified time too often for fear lest this fact might militate against him in the awarding of future contracts. Moreover, as the writer quoted above has pointed out,[6] contractors frequently have large amounts of capital tied up in wages and materials and therefore every delay on a partially completed building represents considerable cost for interest. Finally, "since the profitableness of the business does not depend upon a single contract but upon many of them, the speed with which each building operation is finished and another

[5] N. R. Whitney, "Jurisdiction in American Building-Trades Unions," in Johns Hopkins University Studies, ser. xxxii, no. 1, p. 138.
[6] Ibid.

begun, or, in other words, the rapidity of the 'turn over,' is a very important element in the builder's economy."[7]

In contrast to the above, establishments in certain other industries are apparently able to stand a rather lengthy shutdown of their plants. Thus the average number of days closed per establishment was thirty or more in the following industries among others: coal and coke, cotton and woolen goods, cotton goods, glass, gloves and mittens, iron and steel, ore mining, pottery, smelting and refining, and stoves and furnaces. It would seem that in those industries where the employer can keep on hand a certain amount of stock, as is sometimes done, for example, in the coal and glass industries, or where the commodity or service does not need to be supplied at very frequent intervals, or where there is no short season of very great rush of which employees might take advantage for the purpose of striking—in such industries the workmen are at a disadvantage in trying to force the employer to a quick settlement.

It is evident that the duration of strikes is not an all-important factor in determining the success of trade unionism in any particular trade or industry, since the coal, glass, and pottery industries, included in the latter group, are among the best organized industries in the country. It is even possible that, if the necessity of financing long strikes leads to the accumulation of a considerable reserve fund, the increased discipline and conservatism resulting therefrom may actually benefit organization. In those industries, however, where, on account of the poor pay, low intelligence, or shifting character of the employees, it becomes impossible or extremely difficult to provide adequate finances for a long strike, it is highly probable that organization is hindered if the employer cannot be brought quickly to terms. Doubtless one of the reasons for the greater success of trade unionism in the garment industry than in the textile industry—both of which are very weak financially and employ great numbers of women and only slightly skilled workers, ordinarily difficult to organize—is the fact that in the for-

[7] Whitney, p. 138.

mer, concessions can be obtained from employers with much more speed and much less sacrifice than in the latter. This matter of the duration of strikes is also of great importance in connection with the facility with which the sympathetic strike can be successfully employed as a trade-union device, and will be discussed in the consideration of that subject.

*The Sympathetic Strike.*—Sometimes a weakness in an individual union, conducting a strike alone, may be overcome if joint action with another union can be secured; or, at any rate, the power of a number of unions acting together may prove far more effectual than that of a single union acting alone. If the individual union on strike is poorly organized, it may be possible for the employer to supply easily the places of the strikers, with little or no interruption to his business. But if other classes of workmen, employed by the same firm, happen to be strongly organized, and if the demands of the first union are backed up by the concerted action of these strong organizations, the employer, unable to fill readily the places of the well organized men, may find it advisable to yield to the demands of the weak union. Or even in case the unions involved are of comparatively equal strength, it is easy to see that the difficulties of the employer in keeping his plant in operation are multiplied according to the number of places which he may have to fill. The realization of these advantages for the unions is secured through the sympathetic strike.

The sympathetic strike has been employed sporadically in various industries. Dr. Stockton mentions instances of its use in the printing trades, the glass trades, the waterfront and marine trades, the wall paper trades, and by the musicians, the teamsters, and various other unions, for the assistance of sister organizations.[8] Its most systematic and successful use, however, is to be found among the building trades. The employment of sympathetic strikes in this industry has been promoted by the formation of leagues or

[8] Stockton, pp. 107–122.

councils among the numerous trades engaged in the industry. Local councils were at first formed in many cities. In 1897 a national body, known as the National Building Trades Council, was organized. This was superseded in importance in 1904 by the Structural Building Trades Alliance, which in 1908 gave way to the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor. It is unnecessary for our purposes to go into the differences in the structure of these various organizations. Suffice it to say that they all had as one of their objects the formation of local building trades councils and the promotion of united action by the unions in the building industry. As employed by these councils the sympathetic strike has proved a powerful weapon for the unions. Professor Commons declares that, with the employers unorganized, the sympathetic strike as used by the United Board of Building Trades of New York City (formed in March, 1902) was irresistible.[9] The Industrial Commission reported that both employers and employees agreed that the sympathetic strike had been a powerful influence in unionizing the building trades of Chicago.[10]

An example from this industry will illustrate the effectiveness of a sympathetic strike in breaking the opposition of an employer. In 1913 the contract for the cutting of stone on the new Field-Columbian Museum of Chicago was awarded to the Norcross Brothers Company, a firm which did not employ members of the Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association. The job, it was known, would give employment to two or three hundred stone cutters for at least three years, and it was desired to get this work for members of the union. The general contractor for the building was the Thompson-Starrett Company, by whom the stone work had been subcontracted to the Norcross Company. The latter firm declared that it would have no difficulty in setting the stone; and efforts on the part of the Building Trades Department to get the general contractors to compel the employment of union stone cutters met with the response that they did not

[9] J. R. Commons, Trade Unionism and Labor Problems, p. 68.
[10] Report of Industrial Commission, vol. viii, p. xxi.

see that they should bother themselves, inasmuch as they were in no trouble. Now it happened that the Thompson-Starrett Company also had the contract for the Continental Commercial National Bank building in Chicago. In order to compel this company to see to it that the work in question was done by union men, a strike was called on the bank building. It lasted for a week or ten days. Then a conference was called, as a result of which the president of the Thompson-Starrett Company stated that he would cease payment to Norcross Brothers until stone cutters satisfactory to the Building Trades Council of Chicago were employed, whereupon work was resumed upon the bank building. Within a short time after this the Norcross Brothers Company entered into an agreement with the Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association that they would employ none but members of that organization on the work in question, and signed a three-year agreement with the local branch of the union.[11]

In recent years provision for joint action has been made by various unions in other industries. In 1908 the Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor was formed, in 1909 the Railroad Employees Department, and in 1912 the Mining Department. In the Metal Trades Department, as in the Building Trades Department, there are branches in different cities made up of the local unions of the various metal trades. The Railroad Employees Department is composed principally[12] of the unions having jurisdiction over the men in railroad shops. Here joint action is provided for through the formation of system federations, that is, federations of unions controlling the workmen in the shops of various railroad systems; for example, the Illinois Central System. At the 1914 convention of the department it was reported that such federations had been established on fifty-four systems. On forty-three of these

[11] Proceedings, Building Trades Department, 1913, pp. 36, 37.

[12] Provision is made in the constitution (Constitution, 1914, sec. 1) for a transportation section, and for this reason the Railway Clerks and the Switchmen's Union are admitted to the department. This section, however, is as yet of decidedly minor importance.

systems federated agreements with the railroads had been secured; on eleven the unions had not succeeded as yet in securing such agreements.[13] The four railroad brotherhoods have a plan according to which, after the fulfillment of certain stringent conditions, federations may be formed on individual railroad systems by two or more of the brotherhoods. The conditions for the entrance of any brotherhood into a system federation are that two thirds of the members of the organization on the system shall have voted in favor of federation and the chief executive of the organization shall have given his approval.[14] The five trades composing the Allied Printing Trades Association have also under consideration a plan providing for closer affiliation and joint action in case of trouble.[15] In all of these cases the federation has as one of its chief purposes the bringing of the united pressure of all the unions in the industry upon the employer whenever any single union is unable to come to what is considered a fair agreement with him. It is evident that unions are placing increasing emphasis upon the importance of joint action in overcoming the opposition of employers.

The sympathetic strike, however, has by no means proved

[13] Proceedings, 1914, pp. 57–58. Most of these system federations, however, are not connected with the Railroad Employees Department, which aims to be a federation of federations. At the 1914 convention it was reported that only twelve of the large system federations had affiliated with the department (ibid., p. 126).

[14] Plan of System Federation (as amended June 17, 1914), sec. 2.

[15] See International Photo Engravers' Union, Proceedings, 1914, pp. 39–45. The difficulty which prevents the printing trades from reaching an agreement for the promotion of joint action is the question of finance. The Typographical Union desires the strike benefits of all the trades going out to be paid by that union with which the difficulty originated. The four smaller unions, on the other hand, favor the establishment of a common fund for financing strikes through the payment of an equal per capita tax by the members of all the unions. Such a proposition was endorsed by a conference of representatives of the five international unions in the allied printing trades on January 13, 1914, but was unanimously defeated when brought up before the convention of the Typographical Union for approval. The union, however, endorsed the other plan, and the executive council was instructed to use its best efforts toward the consummation of such an agreement (Report of Officers, 1914, p. 148, Proceedings, 1914, pp. 80, 95).

an unmixed blessing to trade unionism, and it has been roundly denounced by two of our most prominent labor leaders. Mr. John Mitchell said in 1902: "Sympathetic strikes have many adherents, and the efficacy of such methods appeals strongly to those who, being directly involved in trouble, do not always recognize the effect of their action upon the public mind; but the past history of the labor movement teaches lessons that should not be forgotten to-day. As far as my knowledge goes, I do not know of one solitary sympathetic strike of any magnitude which has been successful; on the contrary, the most conspicuous among the sympathetic labor struggles have resulted in ignominious and crushing defeat, not only for the branch of industry originally involved, but also for the divisions participating through sympathy."[16] Likewise Mr. Gompers in 1903, arguing against an industrial form of organization, said that such a system implied the use of sympathetic strikes, and that time and experience had demonstrated that as a general proposition such strikes should be discarded, and that strikes of particular trades or callings had had the largest number of successes with a minimum of defeats.[17] In the face of such expressions of condemnation, how shall we account for the increasing favor in which joint action is coming to be held?

In the first place, it must be admitted that there are dangers in the use of the sympathetic strike. In the building industry it has been constantly invoked by individual unions and building-trades councils in contests concerning jurisdiction, and in this way has served to extend and intensify these destructive struggles.[18] In fact, a recent writer upon jurisdiction in the building-trades unions proposes the abolition of the sympathetic strike in questions of jurisdiction as the most valuable preventive measure against

[16] Proceedings of Special Convention, United Mine Workers, July, 1902, p. 39.

[17] Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, 1903, p. 19.

[18] "It is because of the use of sympathetic strikes that the evils involved in jurisdictional conflicts are so widespread and costly" (Whitney, p. 12).

disputes over such matters.[19] Then too, the sympathetic strike has frequently led to the breaking of agreements by unions which had themselves no grievance against their employers. This has tended to weaken the confidence of employers in the good faith of unions as contracting parties and has undoubtedly had a detrimental effect upon public opinion. It was probably to this that Mr. Mitchell was referring when he said that those involved in sympathetic strikes do not always recognize the effect of their action upon the public mind.

Finally, in many instances sympathetic strikes have been recklessly engaged in by unions which had no voice concerning the merits of the original controversy. A union has a difficulty with an employer, is unable to reach a settlement, and goes out on strike. Then after the issue has been thus drawn, other unions, which have not been consulted concerning the validity of the demands which led to the rupture, are asked to lend their support in the form of a sympathetic strike. The Teamsters have been probably the most frequent sufferers in this respect. Their work is complementary to that of so many other occupations that their union has been constantly besieged with appeals to go out in sympathy with other unions. Too often in the past the officers of the union have yielded to these appeals, usually with disastrous results. The most important and spectacular case was that of the strike in sympathy with the Garment Workers in Chicago in 1905. Concerning the condition of the union at the close of this strike President Tobin afterwards said: "In 1905 . . . we were practically disrupted, almost penniless, hated by all honest employers, and scorned and despised by even the trade-union movement itself."[20] What made this disaster so great was the fact that the strike was not confined to the clothing establishments, but developed into a general strike involving thou-

[19] Whitney, p. 174.

[20] Proceedings, 1912, p. 5. In justice to the present management of this union it should be stated that in recent years appeals for sympathetic support have been firmly resisted.

sands of the union teamsters in the city, and thus drawing into the conflict third parties having no connection with the original dispute. It is little wonder that the conclusion of such a strike left the organization in the status above described by a subsequent president.

Probably the most conspicuous labor conflict ever waged in this country was the great Pullman strike of 1894. On account of the business depression then existing, the Pullman Palace Car Company had made a considerable reduction in the wages of its employees. The latter were organized as a branch of the American Railway Union, an organization embracing in its jurisdiction all the workmen employed on railroads and having an estimated membership of at least one hundred and fifty thousand. Believing that they would receive the full support of this organization, the Pullman employees decided to strike. The American Railway Union had advised against a strike at that particular time, but the strike having been declared, determined, nevertheless, to give its support. Members of the union employed on the railroads were forbidden to handle the Pullman cars. The attempt to enforce this decree led to sympathetic strikes on practically all the railroads radiating from Chicago and on some of the affiliated lines, and for a time resulted in a paralysis of transportation. The strike, however, led to disaster for the union. Interference with the transportation of the mails led to the intervention of the federal government.[21] Injunctions were procured, several of the strike leaders were sentenced to prison, and the men failed altogether to procure their demands. After this the American Railway Union rapidly declined in importance.

Now it was doubtless sympathetic strikes of a spectacular sort like this Pullman strike that Mr. Mitchell had in mind when he declared that the most conspicuous among the sympathetic labor struggles had resulted in ignominious and crushing defeat for the unions. In fact, the occasion for his remarks was a proposal that a general strike of all coal

[21] H. W. Laidler, Boycotts and the Labor Struggle, pp. 100–108.

miners be inaugurated for the support of the anthracite miners, then engaged in their great struggle of 1902. Here a general strike would have drawn into the conflict outside employers, namely, the numerous bituminous operators, who had absolutely nothing to do with the attitude of the anthracite operators towards their miners, and many of whom, moreover, were fair to organized labor and had contracts with the miners' union. Mr. Mitchell's foresight discerned clearly that a sympathetic strike of the nature proposed could not but destroy the confidence of the operators in the contractual responsibility of the miners' union, and, with its tying up of the basic industry of our economic life, lead to a powerful condemnation of the organization by public opinion.

Although Mr. Gompers was also quoted as being opposed to sympathetic strikes, he did not mean to say that a sympathetic strike should under no circumstances occur. Under certain conditions he thought it might be not only justifiable but practical and successful, even if only as an emphatic protest against a great injustice or wrong.[22] Just what these conditions were he did not state, but the subsequent development of plans for joint action such as have been outlined above and the experience with dangers such as we have just considered enable us to specify certain safeguards by the observance of which it seems that the perils of sympathetic strikes to organized labor may be minimized and their effectiveness as weapons for fighting the employer enhanced.

First, there should be an established agency by means of which the calling of sympathetic strikes could be regulated and restricted. It should not be left to an individual union to formulate alone the issues of a conflict without consulting the other unions that may afterwards be drawn into the struggle sympathetically. Thus in 1899 President Fox of the Iron Molders' Union reported that the Coremakers complained that the Iron Molders refused to support them by

[22] Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, 1903, p. 19.

sympathetic strikes when they became involved in disputes with their employers. Mr. Fox declared, however, that the Iron Molders could not afford to have their members involved whenever the members of a kindred trade, upon whom little restraint seemed to be exercised, chose to make demands upon their employers. He thought that the members of the Iron Molders' Union should be consulted before the beginning of the battle. He stated that, with the approval of the executive board, he had always refused to countenance sympathetic strikes without due compliance with law, since otherwise employers would lose faith in the organization as a responsible body with which to enter into an agreement.[23] In September, 1899, the Conference Board of New York and vicinity—a board made up of local unions of molders—was suspended from the Central Federated Union of that city for handling non-union patterns at a time when the pattern makers were upon a strike and for failure to support the latter by a sympathetic strike.[24] The Molders, however, have strict regulations for the control of strikes and have always adhered to the position maintained by President Fox. This attitude would seem to be based upon sound policy. A regulation that a union must obtain the approval of its sister organizations before delivering its ultimatum to the employer must undoubtedly tend to make the union more conservative in its demands. Hasty strikes over trivialities may be prevented, and the calling of the strike, if necessary, may be fixed at a time more opportune for all the unions concerned.

An agency whereby this restriction and regulation of sympathetic strikes can be maintained is provided through the various forms of federation which have just been outlined. In the rules of the Building Trades Department, the Metal Trades Department, and the Railroad Employees Department, in the plan of system federation in force among the four railroad brotherhoods, and in the proposed scheme for closer affiliation among the printing trades are to be

[23] Proceedings, 1899, p. 14.
[24] Iron Molders' Journal, December, 1899, p. 589.

found regulations, all of which, though differing in details, have for their purpose to prevent the calling of any strike in which sympathetic assistance is expected until the organization through which the difficulty originated has submitted its case for the approval of the other organizations from which it desires support.[25]

In order to avoid spreading the evils resulting from jurisdictional disputes, these federated agreements should also forbid the use of sympathetic strikes in case of such disputes. The Building Trades, the Metal Trades, and the Railroad Employees Department of the American Federation of Labor, all have rules to facilitate the peaceful settlement of jurisdictional disputes. These departments, however, have not been able to eliminate conflicts, especially in the building trades, where the sympathetic strike is frequently resorted to in order to establish claims to jurisdiction, the result often being the formation of rival councils. But because a weapon is sometimes used for wrong purposes is no reason why it need be abolished entirely.

Secondly, sympathetic strikes should be so regulated that they will not necessitate any violation of agreements by the unions participating in them. We have seen how President Fox of the Iron Molders' Union and President Mitchell of the United Mine Workers strongly opposed sympathetic strikes where such a violation was involved, inasmuch as they thought that the reliability of unions as contracting parties would be impaired thereby. Two methods have been pursued in order to obviate this difficulty. One method has been to provide in the agreement with the employer that a sympathetic strike shall not constitute a violation of its terms. This is the plan which has been

[25] The details of these regulations are to be found in the following: Constitution and By-Laws to Govern Local Councils, Building Trades Department, 1914, secs. 33, 34; Constitution, Metal Trades Department, 1914, art. x; Constitution, Railroad Employees Department, 1914, sec. 8; Constitution, Subordinate System Federation, 1914, sec. 17; Plan of System Federation (for the railroad brotherhoods) as amended June 17, 1914, sec. 3; Proposed Agreement among the Allied Printing Trades, art. iii, sec. 2, in Proceedings, Photo Engravers' Union, 1914, p. 41.

generally pursued in the building trades, and the rules of the Building Trades Department provide that no local council shall enter into an agreement with a contractors' or employers' association that forbids the sympathetic strike.[26] Similarly the proposed agreement of 1914 among the printing trades contained a section which provided that all contracts negotiated in the future by local unions should contain a clause stipulating that these contracts should be null and void in case of difficulty with any other local union, provided arbitration of the difficulty was refused by the employer, or in certain other contingencies.[27]

The other method of avoiding a violation of agreements is to have all the contracts of the unions desiring to render each other sympathetic assistance come to an end simultaneously. The United Brewery Workmen furnish a good example of this plan. Here, it is true, we are dealing with an industrial union, but for our present purposes exactly the same principle is involved as in the schemes for joint action which we have been considering. All workmen in breweries are members of the one organization, but separate local unions are formed for various divisions of the industry. There are, for example, local unions of teamsters, brewers, bottlers, engineers, firemen, and so on, each meeting separately and transacting all business pertaining to its respective craft. United action by the various local unions is secured through a joint local executive board containing representatives of the different crafts and thus corresponding to the local building-trades or metal-trades councils. Each craft has its own separate contract with the employer; but all contracts must be submitted to the firm through the joint local executive board. Now all these contracts must expire at the same time, and the rejection of one by an employer means the rejection of all.[28] Thus pro-

[26] Constitution and By-Laws to Govern Local Councils, 1913, sec. 3.
[27] Proposed Agreement among the Allied Printing Trades, art. v, in Proceedings, International Photo Engravers' Union, 1914, p. 42.
[28] Letter from the Joint Local Executive Board of the United Brewery Workmen of Columbus, O., in the Iron Molders' Journal, June, 1907, p. 478.

vision is made for bringing to bear upon the employer the united pressure of all his employees without the danger of a violation of contract on the part of any. A similar method of preventing a violation of contracts because of joint action can be found in other unions of a more or less industrial type. In system federations, where federated agreements are made for all the unions at one time, the same practice prevails. The Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor is also aiming to put into practice such a plan, the constitution providing that it shall be the policy of all organizations affiliated with local metal-trades councils to have local agreements with employers terminate upon the same date.[29]

Of the two policies, the latter, it would seem, is the one toward which unions seeking joint action should strive. The insertion in the agreement of the union with the employer of a clause declaring that a sympathetic strike shall not constitute a violation of the agreement may save the face of the union, in case such a strike occurs, but will do little to lessen the irritation of an employer because of the uncertainty of the contract and the frequent interruptions to business. A writer on the Chicago building-trades dispute of 1900 gives, as one of the reasons why the employers wished to break the building-trades council of that city, their desire to eliminate the sympathetic strike, since there was no certainty that an agreement made with an individual union, though for a specific period, would not be broken at any time.[30]

In the building industry, however, it will probably be more difficult to bring about this arrangement than in an industry like that of brewing. In the former, the various classes of workmen do not make their contracts with a single employer, as is the case in the latter, but most of them form their agreements with various subcontractors, there being thus a different employer for each craft, although

[29] Constitution, 1914, art. x, sec. 4.

[30] E. L. Bogart, "The Chicago Building Trades Dispute," in Commons, Trade Unionism and Labor Problems, p. 112.

all crafts work upon the same building. Since there would seldom be the same set of subcontractors on different buildings, it would be practically impossible to make provision for the simultaneous termination of all of the contracts on a building, unless all of the building-trades agreements within the territory in which the subcontractors did their work were made to end at the same time. Some unions, however, would be at a disadvantage if all agreements were formed at the same time. As was stated before, unions endeavor to form their agreements during the busiest season, since they are then in a more advantageous position for obtaining favorable terms. But, inasmuch as the construction of a building involves many successive operations, some of which come far in advance of others—the bricklaying and masonry work, for example, being among the first and the painting among the last—the busy seasons of the several building crafts do not altogether coincide, and consequently it may be advantageous for one union to make its demands considerably in advance of another.

Thirdly, in case the strike is a lengthy one, it is essential that all of the unions participating therein should be capable of supporting their members to the conclusion. A strong union, capable of paying its members strike benefits for a considerable period of time, is not willing that its men should be called out in support of some weak organization, which after two or three weeks fails to supply adequate benefits to its members; these, by gradually returning to work, leave the stronger organization to carry on alone a struggle in which it had originally no direct interest. President Valentine of the Molders gave this as one of the reasons for the failure of the joint movement of the metal trades in Los Angeles in 1910 and 1911.[31]

From the foregoing consideration it follows that the value of the sympathetic strike as an instrument in industrial warfare is largely affected by the average duration of strikes in the industry in which it is to be used, since in a short strike

[31] Proceedings, Molders, 1912, pp. 9–11.

the financial strength of the union is a less important factor in determining the success of the strike than where the men must remain out for a long time. In this respect the building-trades unions possess a distinct advantage over the metal-trades unions. The editor of the Molders' Journal, commenting in 1908 upon the prospects of the newly formed Metal Trades Department, asserted that time would be necessary to demonstrate its usefulness since the application of federated effort had so far been confined to the building trades, where conditions differed materially from those in manufacturing industries. He called attention, among other things, to the fact that in the building industry strikes are usually settled within a few weeks and in a large number of cases do not call for the payment of strike benefits. In contrast with this he pointed out that in manufacturing industries strikes often last for months, the payment of strike benefits frequently runs up into hundreds of thousands of dollars, and the workmen of one State are continually competing with those of another.[32] The Metal Trades Department has carried on a campaign of education to induce the financially weak organizations in the department to raise their dues and per capita taxes so as to be able to pay strike benefits commensurate with those paid by the strong organizations. The secretary of the department declared that, until this was accomplished, only such steps for improved conditions should be taken as would not involve trade

[32] International Molders' Journal, March, 1908, pp. 198–200. The statistics of strikes in the United States from 1881 to 1905 show that the average duration of strikes per establishment was 22.9 days in the building trades and 40.8 days in foundries and machine shops. The average number of days closed per establishment was 14.5 and 21.7 respectively. The actual difference in average duration of strikes was probably greater, however, than these figures indicate. This is due to the fact that the statistics do not include strikes which lasted less than a single day. From 1901 to 1905 the Bureau of Labor collected such statistics. The figures, which are admittedly incomplete, show that of the 641 strikes of less than one day, 50.55 per cent were in the building trades. On the other hand, only 26.02 per cent of the longer strikes were in the building trades (Twenty-first Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1906, pp. 47, 103, 24).

organizations generally. He admitted that progress was slow, but thought that they could well afford to be patient and move cautiously for the present.

If all of these restrictions were properly observed, the sympathetic strike would correspond closely to the method of joint action pursued in an industrial union like the Brewery Workmen. The system of negotiating agreements used by this organization has already been described. It will be noticed that under this plan the requirement is observed that one craft submit its demands to the other crafts for approval before the declaration of a strike; also that the agreements terminate simultaneously so as to prevent a breaking of contracts and in this way lessen the irritation of the employer; and that adequate financial support for all is provided by the national union in case of a strike. Most of the unions in the federations which we have been discussing are probably opposed to industrial unionism; but it seems that the advantages of craft autonomy might be retained and at the same time provision made for effective joint action under a system of what might be called industrial federation, such as that provided for in the Building Trades Department, the Metal Trades Department, the system federations on the railroads, and the proposed closer alliance in the printing trades.

To conclude our discussion of the sympathetic strike, then, we may say that, although it has at times been accompanied by disastrous consequences, nevertheless, if properly restricted and regulated in the manner above set forth, it may be the means of enhancing considerably the strategic strength of the laborers in any contest with their employers, and, as has been the case in the building trades, may prove a valuable method of extending organization, especially for the weaker unions.

*The Boycott.*—Next to the strike, the boycott has been the most effective device employed by the unions in overcoming the opposition of the employer. The utility of the boycott as a means of overcoming the ignorance or indiffer-

ence of the laborers themselves has already been considered. It is impossible, however, to draw any hard and fast line between boycotts levied for this purpose and boycotts to overcome the opposition of the employer. Sometimes one motive may predominate and sometimes the other, but generally there will be a combination of the two. Consequently the remarks which are to follow may be taken to apply to all boycotts without any attempt to differentiate as to their purpose.

The boycott is a common instrument of warfare among American trade unions. The successful results achieved by its use in bringing about the organization of the mill workers have already been noted. In several other industries also organization can be traced largely to the use of this device. Thus the historian of the Brewery Workmen writes: "The boycott has played a most important part in the history of the brewery workers' movement in America, more important perhaps than in that of any other trade. The ten-year boycott against the New York 'Pool Beer,' which was decided chiefly by the attitude of the New England workingmen; the boycott against St. Louis beer, which ended favorably for the brewery workers on account of the strong support of the Knights of Labor in the South,—in short, every one of the greatest struggles of the brewery workers was decided by the boycott, which proved the strongest weapon in the hands of the workingmen in these conflicts."[33] Largely through the use of this instrument the brewing industry has come to be the most strongly organized industry in the country. Likewise it has been said of the hatters that "in a campaign of organization which lasted perhaps less than a decade and in which the boycott played a prominent part, the Hatters' Union succeeded in organizing one hundred and sixty-six of the one hundred and seventy-eight fur hat manufacturers of the country."[34] Probably the best testimony to the efficacy of the boycott as a

[33] H. Schlüter, The Brewing Industry and the Brewery Workers' Movement in America, p. 238.
[34] Wolman, The Boycott in American Trade Unions, p. 139.

device for overcoming the opposition of employers is to be found in the frequent appeals of employers for injunctions against boycotts and the vigorous efforts of the American Anti-Boycott Association since its formation in 1902 to establish their illegality.

Since the boycott accomplishes its purpose in influencing the employer through the restrictions which it causes upon the amount of his sales, it is evident that its utility as a trade-union device depends upon the degree in which it is able to bring about this restriction. Hence, the following conditions may be laid down as necessary to the success of a boycott:[35] (1) It should be placed upon either some material which is worked upon by organized labor or some commodity which is consumed by the laboring classes; for example, the boycott upon non-union trim as waged by the Carpenters, or the boycott upon non-union beer as waged by organized labor in general. In the present state of public opinion little help could be looked for from the general public in refusing to buy boycotted articles. Therefore a boycott upon some luxury never consumed by the ordinary workman or upon some material never worked upon by union men would in most cases be futile.[36] (2) There should be an effective substitute for the article boycotted. A boycott upon the product of a monopoly would stand small chance of success unless the article or service was one which could be foregone with little or no inconvenience on the part of the workman. (3) It should be waged against a firm which sells to a home market. For this reason it is obvious that a boycott against a firm that exported most of

[35] For a detailed discussion of these conditions see Wolman's monograph.

[36] Sometimes, however, an indirect influence may be brought into play so as to make a boycott effective even where the laborers are not the direct consumers of the commodity boycotted. As Wolman points out, this is true where some political or economic influence can be brought to bear by trade unions in causing certain classes of consumers to cease buying the commodity. Thus political pressure has been brought to bear upon public officials to compel them to cease buying the school books of certain concerns considered unfair to organized labor (Wolman, The Boycott in American Trade Unions, p. 89).

its product would be ineffective, since the boycotters would not purchase the commodity under any circumstances, boycott or no boycott. (4) There should be a knowledge of the destination of the boycotted article, or else the goods should be easy to identify, since the average workman will not put himself to much trouble to find out which goods he should not purchase, although he may be willing to support the boycott if he can tell with ease what goods to avoid. (5) The number of unionists must be large and under a central unifying authority. If unionists constitute only a small proportion of the purchasers of a commodity, their failure to buy may result in no appreciable loss to the employer, and, if there is no central authority, the advertising and the enforcement of the boycott become difficult. (6) A limit should be placed upon the number of boycotts. The American Federation of Labor has attempted to do this, claiming that otherwise there is a loss in effectiveness. (7) A boycott cannot well be levied by a weak union against a business firm, a considerable part of whose employees are members of some strong union that is opposed to the boycott. An attempt by the unskilled laborers in a cigar factory to inaugurate a boycott against the cigars of that factory, in spite of the blue label of the Cigar Makers would doubtless be of no avail.

The factors which have thus far been enumerated as conditioning the field for the use of the boycott are all economic in their nature. In addition to these the applicability of the boycott as a trade-union device is limited by certain legal and ethical considerations. The law makes a distinction between primary and secondary boycotts, the latter being characterized by the fact that third persons not originally parties to the dispute are unwillingly dragged into it. Secondary boycotts have generally been held to be illegal, and, inasmuch as nearly every boycott tends to become secondary, this practically amounts to putting the ban of the law upon all of them. Moreover, certain ethical considerations lend weight to this legal antipathy to the boycott.

These have been clearly pointed out by Dr. Wolman. In the boycott as ordinarily conducted the employer has no opportunity for a fair hearing of his side of the case. "The union acts as judge, declares the employer guilty, invokes to its aid a vast power foreign to the dispute—the membership of affiliated unions—and, if the boycotted commodity is sold for the most part to workingmen, it succeeds in destroying the employer's business."[37] These possibilities of evil seem sufficient to condemn any indiscriminate legalization of all boycotts.

It appears, therefore, that, although the boycott has at times proved itself a most powerful weapon in promoting the organization of labor, there are decided limitations, economic, legal, and ethical, upon its use as a device for overcoming the opposition of employers. The economic limitations, it is evident, affect only certain industries; for example, those in which there is a monopoly and no substitute, or in which the commodity produced is one for which there is no demand on the part of laborers. The legal restrictions, on the other hand, if strictly enforced, and the ethical limitations, if applicable to every boycott, would place a practically absolute veto upon any use of the device. It seems, however, that ever since the decision of the United States Supreme Court in the Danbury Hatters' Case declared the boycott an offense against the Sherman Anti-Trust Law there has been a considerable use of the boycott by the trade unions of this country, though attended with less publicity than formerly on account of the abolition of the unfair list.[38] Moreover, on account of the recent passage of the Clayton Act, containing provisions in regard to the boycott,[39] it is probable that, pending authoritative ju-

[37] Wolman, The Boycott in American Trade Unions, pp. 143–144.

[38] Ibid., p. 134.

[39] Section 20 of this act relating to the issuance of restraining orders or injunctions provides in part: "That no restraining order or injunction shall be granted by any court of the United States, or a judge or the judges thereof, in any case between an employer and employees, or between employers and employees, or between employers, or between persons employed and persons seeking employment, involving, or growing out of, a dispute concerning terms or

dicial decisions, the exact legal status of this device will again be in an unsettled condition for a number of years.

Finally, the force of the ethical limitations upon the use of the boycott should depend upon the purpose for which it is waged and the prevailing state of public opinion. If it is waged for the enforcement of a demand concerning which, according to the prevailing state of public opinion, there is justifiable ground for a difference of opinion between the employer and his working force, then the successful application of the boycott may be considered an unfair and undeserved hardship upon the employer. For instance, if a union which is unable to obtain compliance with its demands for an increased wage or a shorter day by the use of a strike resorts to a boycott to obtain these ends, it might well be that in such a case real collective bargaining would be destroyed, and the fixing of the wage or the working day might depend upon merely the arbitrary will of the union. But, on the other hand, if the boycott is used simply as an instrument to promote collective bargaining, and public opinion in the community approves of such a system, then the boycott should be looked upon as a justifiable device. Thus, if the boycott is used for bringing about the organization of a class of workers otherwise extremely difficult to bring together, or if it is used as a device for compelling an obstinate employer to cease discrimination against members of a union or to give recognition to the union committees,[40]

conditions of employment, unless necessary to prevent irreparable injury to property, or to a property right, of the party making the application, for which injury there is no adequate remedy at law, and such property or property right must be described with particularity in the application, which must be in writing and sworn to by the applicant or by his agent or attorney."

The clause relating to the issuance of injunctions against boycotts provides that "no such restraining order or injunction shall prohibit any person or persons, whether singly or in concert, . . . from ceasing to patronize or to employ any party to such dispute, or from recommending, advising, or persuading others by peaceful and lawful means so to do" (U. S. Statutes at Large, 63d Cong., 2d Sess., Chap. 323, 1914, Sec. 20).

[40] Wolman mentions the shirt, collar, and cuff manufacturing industry as one in which the boycott might well be used for these purposes (p. 139).

in such cases the boycott is an instrument for the promotion of collective bargaining, and, if public opinion approves of collective bargaining, it should not condemn the boycott when conducted simply for the attainment of that end. Here it is not a case, as before, of an individual employer setting up his opinion against an individual union, but rather one of a single employer setting up his individual opinion against the prevailing sentiment of an entire community; and no injustice would be worked against that employer if he were compelled through the power of the boycott to make his own relationships with his employees conform to the standards generally recognized as proper.

Considerations such as these may have an important bearing upon future judicial decisions concerning the legality of the boycott. A writer in the Quarterly Journal of Economics, speaking of the recent Clayton Act, says: "Doubtless in its final interpretation, something will depend upon the use made by labor organizations of the rights accorded them under the law, and doubtless more will depend upon the drift of public sentiment and opinion as reflected in the election returns from now on."[41]

*The Union Label.*—The union label, like the boycott, is a device which is of importance for the purpose of overcoming the opposition of the employer as well as for the purpose of securing the affiliation of workmen difficult to reach by the more direct methods of organizing. First employed by a local union of cigar makers in San Francisco in 1875,[42] and adopted by the national union of cigar makers in 1880,[43] the union label has since become a common device of American trade unions, the secretary of the American Federation of Labor reporting in 1914 that there were 56 labels

[41] P. G. Wright, "The Contest in Congress between Organized Labor and Organized Business," in Quarterly Journal of Economics, vol. xxix, p. 260.

[42] E. R. Spedden, "The Trade Union Label," in Johns Hopkins University Studies, ser. xxviii, no. 2, p. 10.

[43] Ibid., p. 14.

and 10 cards[44] issued by various organizations which had been endorsed by the Federation.[45] On September 30, 1914, there were affiliated with the Union Label Trades Department of the Federation 38 national unions with an approximate membership of 422,500.[46]

Here also it is impossible to make an absolutely clear distinction between the two purposes accomplished by the use of the union label. Therefore, since we have noted in the previous chapter the value of the label in bringing about the organization of indifferent workers, it is desired in this chapter to call attention to the fact that the union label may also serve the purpose of turning the hostility of the employer into outright desire for organization. As a trade-union device the union label differs only in degree and not in kind from the boycott. It effects its purposes by its influence upon the sales of the employer, but rather through its appeal to his desire for gain than to his fear of loss. The request to workmen to purchase only goods bearing the union label is in effect equivalent to a request to boycott all non-union goods. Thus the union label becomes valuable as providing a mark of identification in a general boycott against non-union goods, as, for example, in the boycott of the Carpenters against non-union trim. Since, however, there are not the same legal obstacles in the way of the union-label propaganda, in that it does not involve the publication of the forbidden unfair list, it is desirable to treat separately of its efficacy as an organizing device.

That the union label may prove a valuable organizing device is well illustrated by the experience of certain unions. The case of the overalls workers has already been cited in our discussion of the label propaganda as a device for over-

[44] A union shop card is similar in its purposes to the union label. It is used in those trades where the labor of the workman results in the rendering of a service rather than in the production of a commodity—for example, the work of a barber or of a retail clerk, or of a bartender—and where from the very nature of the case no label could be employed.

[45] Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, 1914, p. 23.

[46] Ibid., p. 186.

coming the indifference of unorganized laborers. Likewise the union-label agitation must be considered the most important factor in bringing about the organization of the Boot and Shoe Workers. The method of organizing adopted by this union has been extensive advertising and agitation in favor of shoes bearing the union stamp, thus creating a demand for the union product so as to make it worth while for the employer to unionize his factory. In January, 1904, it was reported that this sort of campaign had proved so successful that during the year some sixty factories, employing nearly 16,000 workers, had been added to the union-stamp list.[47] The secretary of the union stated: "The basis of our present degree of organization is the union stamp. To the extent that the stamp becomes popular with the general labor movement, to that extent does our union make progress."[48] Therefore, the union has continued its policy of advertisement and agitation for the union-stamp products. In the year 1911 over $90,000 was spent in this way.[49] The Cigar Makers similarly have spent large sums in advertising their label, for example, $42,000 for the year 1911. Their president, Mr. Perkins, classes the union label as one of the four principal things that make unions strong, the others being high dues, a chain of benefits, and discipline.[50] In studying the causes which have fostered the growth of this union it is impossible to disentangle these various factors. The system of high dues and benefits was inaugurated in 1879; the label, adopted in 1880, came into use in the early part of 1881. In this year the membership of the union, which had fallen from 5800 in 1869 to as low as 1016 in 1877 and 3870 in 1880, reached 12,400. Reports from some of the local unions indicate that this increase was largely due to the use of the union label.[51]

An interesting instance of the efficacy of the union label

[47] Proceedings, 1904, p. 26.
[48] Ibid., p. 47.
[49] Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, 1913, p. 99.
[50] President Perkins's Report to Twenty-second Convention, 1912, p. 24.
[51] Spedden, pp. 15–16.

as an organizing device is provided by the Bakers and Confectioners. This union has found itself confronted with a difficult proposition in the organization of the employees of the large baking combinations which have been effected in recent years, and which have, as a rule, opposed the organization of their employees. In order to overcome this opposition the union has undertaken an extensive campaign of advertising and agitation for union-label products, especially bread, over $30,000 having been spent for these purposes in 1911.[52] In March, 1913, the international officers reported that about forty different articles had been sent out during the year and were reproduced by about one hundred publications in sympathy with the labor movement. Over a million agitation leaflets and cards were put out and supplied free of charge to local unions.[53] The efforts thus made seem to have borne fruit. Especially bitter has been the fight to organize the various plants of the Ward Baking Company. In September, 1914, however, officers of the national union stated to the writer that they had been successful in organizing this company's plants in Chicago, Washington, Rochester, Newark, and Alexandria, and that the reason for this was the desire of the company to get the use of the union label in these cities because of the strong demand in them for the union product.[54] Other unions in which the label or the shop card has played an important part in forwarding organization are the Hatters, the Bartenders, and the Printers.

The efficacy of the union-label propaganda, like that of the boycott, depends upon the extent to which the union can influence the sales of the employer. Here too it is evident that the presence of certain conditions promotes the successful use of the device. Since these conditions are for the most part the same as those which were enumerated in the discussion of the boycott, it is not necessary to state them

[52] Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, 1913, p. 99.

[53] Joint Report of International Officers to the General Executive Board, in Bakers' Journal, March 8, 1913, p. 3.

[54] Interview with Charles Iffland, secretary, Chicago, September 3, 1914.

again in this connection. Suffice it to say that the absence of some of these conditions makes of the union label as well as of the boycott a device of by no means universal applicability in the problem of bringing about the organization of non-union workers. The union label or the boycott could do little toward organizing the employees of the telephone and telegraph companies, where the demand of labor for the services supplied is small and where more or less monopolistic conditions prevail. Nor would they be available for organizing the thousands of unskilled laborers employed in the maintenance-of-way departments of the railroads of the country unless applied by the large brotherhoods, a use which does not seem probable at present and which might lead to legal interference, as in the case of the notable attempt of the American Railway Union to apply the boycott in the Pullman strike of 1894.

On the other hand, in addition to the classes of workers which have already been mentioned, these devices have possibilities of great value in forwarding the organization of such workers as the barbers, the broom makers, the brush makers, the pocket-knife blade grinders and finishers, the glove workers, the collar and cuff workers, and the meat cutters, where laborers can exert a large influence upon demand and where conditions of monopoly do not prevail. In the case of the tobacco workers also, provided (since the dissolution of the American Tobacco Company) a sufficient quantity of union-made product can be put upon the market to supply the legitimate demand of the consuming workman, the boycott and the label ought to prove important factors in extending organization. It should be noted, moreover, that the power of organized labor to wield these weapons effectively is constantly increasing because of the growing numbers of organized workmen, the closer interrelations existing among the various unions as exemplified in the growth of the American Federation of Labor and its different departments, the formation of women's union-label leagues, and the growing financial resources of organized

labor which enable the unions to expend larger and larger sums for the purposes of advertising and agitation. Still greater possibilities would reside in these weapons if large bodies of consumers outside of the unions could be prevailed upon to follow the requests of organized labor; hence the attempt to enlist farmers' organizations in the union-label propaganda. Thus far, however, these attempts seem to have accomplished little.

*The Closed Shop.*—The closed shop should also be noted among those devices which are useful in overcoming the opposition of employers to the organizing of their workmen. However, since the manner in which this device exercises its influence upon the employer and the limitations upon its use have already been considered in our discussion of the methods of securing the affiliation of unorganized workmen, a mere mention will suffice in this connection. It should be borne in mind that we are here referring to the closed-shop rule in its more extended implication; that is, where it provides not only that non-unionists shall not work in a so-called union shop, but also that no unionist shall work with a non-unionist in any shop.

*Competing with Employers.*—A method which has at times been adopted by some unions for overcoming the opposition of employers is that of entering into competition with them. One of the conditions which were pointed out as requisite for the successful prosecution of the boycott was the presence of a substitute for the boycotted article in order that the legitimate demand of consumers might be satisfied. Likewise the attainment of any satisfactory results from the union-label propaganda necessitates a sufficient supply of union-label products to meet such a demand. When the production of regular establishments has been insufficient to meet these needs, the union has at times attempted to supply the demand for union goods through cooperative establishments.

An instance of this is found in the experience of the Tobacco Workers. The label advertiser of this union, ad-

dressing the convention of the United Mine Workers in 1908, said: "Through your efforts [that is, through the patronage of the union label] we have been able to build up factories that employed union labor, but in a few years after they started and began to compete with the American Tobacco Trust the trust would purchase them. The consequence is that after we have given our hard work to establish these factories we are turned out and told they have no further use for us. That has been going on for the past thirteen years."[55] In order to overcome this difficulty, he stated, a Tobacco Workers' Cooperative Company had been formed, which had a factory in operation and was putting goods on the market. In the future the Mine Workers were asked to use the product of this company.[56]

The Bakers and Confectioners have been confronted with similar difficulties. A contributor to their journal writes as follows: "One of the difficulties which may result from the control of the industry by bread trusts, and prevent agitation for union-label bread is that consumers may be able to purchase no other bread but trust product. The only resort of the union then would be to start and operate bakeries of its own."[57] In 1904 a cooperative bakery was established in San José, California. Just previous to this the Bakers had had a strong organization there, composed of about thirty men employed by eight master bakers. They were locked out by the employers, however, and the whole town became non-union. Thus no union bread could be supplied to consumers. A strike was of no avail, since the employers obtained men from outside. Consequently the union determined to establish a bakery of its own. At first the business was unprofitable, but in 1913 it was reported that for the past three years it had been upon a paying basis and was yielding profits of several thousand dollars every six months. The surplus is used in paying out-of-work benefits for idle members as well as for general agitation in behalf of the

[55] Proceedings, United Mine Workers, 1908, p. 209.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Bakers' Journal, April 19, 1913, p. 2.

organization. In 1913 this bakery employed thirty-four men, and the original employers, it was asserted, had been forced out of business. A similar bakery, employing about ten men, was started in St. Paul in 1910, and was reported to be getting along under fairly good circumstances in 1913.[58] The Bakers intend to make further use of this device. In an interview with the writer one of the officers of the union stated that schemes were being worked out for the establishment of movable cooperative shops in order to supply temporarily the demand for union-label bread in those cities where there are no union bakeries. These shops are not intended to be permanent. They are to be purely organizing devices; and when enough of the regular bakeries in a city have become unionized to supply the demand for union-label bread, the temporary shop is to be moved to some other city to repeat the same process.[59]

The Flint Glass Workers also once tried the plan of entering into competition with non-union employers. With the discovery of natural gas in Indiana, there had grown up in that State a number of small factories engaged in the manufacture of whiskey flasks. These factories were non-union, and by the employment of a large number of boys at low wages were able to undersell the union manufacturers and obtain a practical monopoly of the business. The union came to the conclusion that any attempt to unionize these factories by the strike method must fail, since strikes would do nothing more than temporarily inconvenience the employers while they were getting together a new crowd of boys to take the places of those who had gone on strike. Consequently it was decided in 1899 that a better plan would be for the union to erect a factory of its own and, by placing its goods on the market at prices below those which could be afforded by the non-union houses, force them either to unionize their plants or abandon the business. The factory, which was located at Summitville, Indiana, cost $12,000 to build and began operations in October, 1900. It was run

[58] Bakers' Journal, April 19, 1913, p. 2.
[59] Interview with Treasurer Myrup, Chicago, September 3, 1914.

at a financial loss; but it seems that it was partly successful in its purposes, the claim being made that seven out of the eleven non-union factories were compelled to shut down for a while.[60] However, there was not sufficient time to test the real efficacy of the project as an organizing device; for after about one year's operation, the making of these flasks, together with the making of all prescription bottles, passed into the jurisdiction of the Glass Bottle Blowers' Association. The factory was not shut down altogether, but was no longer used for its original purpose. In June, 1903, it burned down, and no new factory was erected.

The Street and Electric Railway Employees have made use of a device analogous to the cooperative shop for the purpose of breaking the opposition of hostile companies. As early as 1901 President Mahon reported that at the quarterly meeting of the national executive board he had been instructed to make an investigation of various automobiles and horseless conveyances for the purpose of carrying passengers, and that if anything suitable could be found that might be used by the organization to compete with various opposing companies, he was to outline a plan for the purchase of such conveyances. He reported that nothing satisfactory could be found, but thought that something might come of the plan in the future.[61] Four years later, at the convention in 1905, he reported that a scheme of this nature had been put into operation at Saginaw, where three automobiles were used to supply transportation during a strike.[62] The general executive board was of the opinion that this was one of the strongest defenses that the organization could have, and advocated the expenditure of $20,000 for the purchase of more machines.[63] A special committee on automobiles recommended that the three machines already purchased be retained, and that the above sum be

[60] Proceedings, 1901, p. 144, Report of Superintendent of Summitville Factory.
[61] Proceedings, 1901, p. 8.
[62] Proceedings, 1905, p. 21.
[63] Ibid., p. 40.

expended for new machines, such machines to seat not less than twenty passengers. This recommendation was adopted by the convention.[64] Since that date the machines have been used from time to time by the organization for the purpose of supplying transportation to the public during strikes. President Mahon stated that the plan has worked well and would be continued in small towns and cities in the future.[65]

The most conspicuous examples of the possibilities of this method in overcoming the opposition of hostile employers are to be found in recent experiences of the Bricklayers and Masons. For six months prior to November 1, 1910, the building trades of Alton, Illinois, had been struggling against the establishment of the non-union shop. The bricklayers went out in sympathy, and in November, 1910, the executive board of the national union determined to come to their assistance financially and otherwise. The board decided in January to inaugurate a policy of competition with the "open shoppers," that is, to figure on all work at actual cost with no profits. To back this policy, $5000 was deposited in one of the Alton banks. The union figured on every building that came into the market and captured, it is asserted, ninety-eight per cent of them, obtaining contracts amounting to more than a quarter of a million dollars. From cellar to roof every bit of work was done by union men of all callings. By September the employers were ready to give up the fight, and signed an agreement establishing friendly relations between themselves and the workmen and guaranteeing union conditions of employment in all trades. A similar policy was pursued at Aberdeen, South Dakota, in 1911. As a result Secretary Dobson says that, while in 1910 ninety-nine per cent of the work was done by non-union men, in 1911 ninety-nine per cent was done by union men. At the time of the report, however, no

[64] Proceedings, 1905, p. 51.
[65] Interview with President W. D. Mahon, Detroit, September 7, 1914.

agreement had as yet been reached with the employers.[66] The plan of entering into competition with employers has since been put into successful operation at other places. In these places, however, the union did not contract for the whole job as at Alton and Aberdeen, but agreed to do the bricklaying work for some union contractor at a rate so far below the regular rate—the union making up the loss to the individual bricklayers—that it became impossible for the non-union contractor to compete in his bidding with the union contractor.[67] In these cases the union practically made the union contractor its agent in bidding against the non-union contractor.

The applicability of this method of overcoming the opposition of employers is dependent upon the presence or absence of certain conditions. In the first place, it is desirable that no large investment of capital in a fixed plant should be necessary, as, of course, the enterprise must come within the financial resources of the union. In some industries where huge capital requirements exist this method would be altogether out of the question, and in many smaller enterprises weak unions would be unable to open up establishments. But even if the union were successful in securing the requisite capital, it would be an unwise policy for it to tie up a large proportion of its resources in this unrealizable form of a fixed plant and thus make them unavailable for the primary defensive purposes of the organization. Whether or not the union is successful in breaking the opposition of employers, it is not desirable that it should attempt to maintain its cooperative establishment as a permanent institution. The history of the majority of cooperative undertakings in production is a dreary succession of financial failures, and a permanent establishment of this sort might prove a continual drain upon the resources of the union. It would seem best that this engaging in competition with the employer should be undertaken purely as an

[66] Forty-sixth Annual Report for term ending December 1, 1911, Report of Secretary Dobson, pp. 522–528.

[67] Interview with Secretary Dobson, Indianapolis, August 29, 1914.

organizing device. When used in this manner the union may rightly consider any losses resulting therefrom as simply in the nature of organizing expenses. But if after a reasonable length of time the undertaking fails to accomplish its organizing purposes, the losses resulting from its continuance mean just so much waste. Or in case the enterprise is successful in breaking the opposition of employers, its continuance is unnecessary as an organizing device, and further loss in carrying on the undertaking again represents pure waste. It is, therefore, desirable that the business in which the union engages be one from which it can quickly retire without financial sacrifice. In this respect the building industry presents ideal conditions, since, with the completion of each contract, the contractor's capital is returned to him in money. On the other hand, where the business necessitates a large fixed plant with expensive machinery and appliances, the disposal thereof might be accomplished only at great financial sacrifice on the part of the union.

In the second place, the success of this method of fighting the employer depends upon the proportion of the total demand which the union is able to supply through its undertaking; that is, it depends upon the comparative importance of the union undertaking as a competitor. In a city like Baltimore an attempt on the part of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees to break the opposition of the company in a strike for recognition by the running of a few automobiles would be altogether foolhardy; but, in a small town or city, where the transportation facilities are furnished by, say, twenty-five cars more or less, the competition of half a dozen or a dozen large passenger automobiles might prove an important factor in bringing the company to terms. As a matter of fact, the association uses its automobiles only in such places. The chances of the union's success are for the same reason in inverse proportion to the extent of the market for the com-

modity or service to be supplied. Consider the case of the Tobacco Workers, for example. Here a factory established by the union must help to supply a national demand. Obviously, unless the organization is prepared to sink a great amount of capital in the enterprise, the diminution which it can cause in the total demand for the products of the regular manufacturers must be almost negligible, and the results in inducing a unionizing of their plants correspondingly small. On the other hand, where the market for the commodity or service is purely local, a union may be able to supply through its enterprise a considerable proportion of the demand without any large investment of capital. In this respect again the building trades possess an advantage, since, as was the case in Alton and Aberdeen, it may be possible for the union to step in and supply the entire local demand for building construction in a small city. The Bakers too possess an advantage in those towns where the demand for bread is supplied by local bakeries, as was the case in San José. In large cities, however, the force of such competition would be much lessened.

Finally, the ability to employ successfully this weapon, competition, is affected by the comparative financial resources of the union and of the employers. In Alton, where the resources of the employers were probably much smaller than those of the union, the employers were unable to stand the loss which would have been incurred by doing the work more cheaply than it was contracted for by the union. But if the union were to undertake a similar campaign against a more powerful group of master builders in a large city, the tables might be reversed.

It is plain, therefore, that the method of entering into competition with the employer for the purpose of overcoming his opposition is one of very limited applicability. This accounts for its infrequent and sporadic employment in the past. On looking over a list of the unions in this country and bearing in mind the above mentioned limitations we

see that, outside of the building trades, there are probably not more than ten or a dozen unions for which this device would be available, and in most of these its prospects cannot be said to be very hopeful. In the building trades, however, the conspicuous success of the Bricklayers in the instances cited points to larger possibilities, especially in the smaller cities and towns.

## CHAPTER III

### Maintenance of Stability

The problem of organizing labor is by no means solved when individual workmen have been induced to come together and form a union. If it were, it is probable that the extent of organization in this country would be, at a conservative estimate, from fifty to one hundred per cent greater than it is at present. This condition is due to the fact that so much of the work of organization is ephemeral in its results. Every year a great number of new unions are formed, but at the same time many others fall to pieces. The affiliation of new members is secured, but old memberships lapse. A few statistics will serve to make this clear.

The American Federation of Labor publishes in its proceedings of each year statistics as to the number of charters issued to local unions by various affiliated national unions and by itself, together with the number of charters surrendered. These figures do not constitute a complete record of local unions formed and disbanded, since in different years various national unions fail to report. On the average, however, approximately one hundred unions report each year, so that the figures may be considered fairly representative for labor as a whole. These reports show that in the sixteen years from 1899 to 1914 there were issued by the various unions reporting and by the American Federation of Labor 50,293 charters, while during the same time 23,390[1] charters were surrendered. In other words, forty-six per cent of the unions formed failed to maintain their existence.

The same tendency can be observed in the experience of

[1] The figures are based upon the reports of the secretary published in the proceedings of the American Federation of Labor from 1899 to 1914.

specific unions. In the forty-seven years from 1868 to 1914 the Typographical Union grew from 79 to 723 local unions, an increase of 644. Within the same period, however, there were chartered over 1500[2] local unions. Nearly 900 unions, or about sixty per cent of those formed, lapsed during the period. In the ten years from December 1, 1903, to December 1, 1913, the Bricklayers showed a gain in local unions from 819 to 957, an increase of 138; during the same period 493 new charters were issued. Making an allowance for probably fifty[3] unions whose charters were surrendered on account of consolidations with other unions, we see that over three hundred of the unions formed, or over sixty per cent, fell to pieces.[4] During the eight years from July 1, 1904, to September 1, 1912, the reports of the secretaries of the Teamsters' Union show that although there were chartered by this organization 714 local unions, at the same time 710 local unions were disbanded, or expelled, or had their charters revoked. It is true that not all of these local unions which were lost ceased to exist, since some of them withdrew to form dual organizations. These withdrawals, however, were important because of the size of the unions involved rather than because of their number. Making due allowance for these,[5] we are probably safe in

[2] The statistics are not altogether complete since those for the year ending April 30, 1894, are lacking. Not including this year, the exact number of local unions chartered was 1634. Not all of these were counted, however, so as to offset a discrepancy in regard to the number of local unions still in existence, caused by the fact that approximately 116 local unions withdrew in order to form the separate national unions of the pressmen, the bookbinders, the stereotypers and electrotypers, and the photo engravers. The figures are taken from the reports of officers at the conventions.

[3] During the period stated, excluding the two years December 1, 1909, to December 1, 1911, 38 unions were reported as having consolidated with others. For these two years no figures were available, but allowing about the average number of consolidations for them, we are probably not far from correct in stating the total number of consolidations as 50.

[4] The totals were calculated from the figures contained in the annual reports of the secretary.

[5] Two of the most important secessions as regards number of local unions concerned were those of the Chicago Teamsters in 1906, when 39 local unions withdrew to form the United Teamsters of

saying that over eighty-five per cent of the unions chartered were unable to hold together.

From many unions come complaints of their inability to hold members in the organization. The secretary of the Retail Clerks declared in 1912 that in a great number of instances, very soon after organizations had been formed, demands had been presented to the merchants, and, with the aid of the national union and of organized labor generally, better working conditions had been secured. He complained, however, that within a short time the local union had either decreased to a small membership or had gone entirely out of existence.[6] In 1908 an official of the Tobacco Workers' Union asserted that the union had organized over 50,000 men at various times, but that it could not muster then more than ten per cent of this number.[7] In the same year the secretary of the Maintenance of Way Employees stated that, if the union had been able to retain all the members initiated during the preceding six years, its membership would have been more than double that of any of the other railway organizations.[8] When we remember that at this time the membership of the Railroad Trainmen—the largest of the railway organizations—was over 100,000 and that in this year the Maintenance of Way Employees paid a per capita tax to the American Federation of Labor on only 13,500 members, we get some idea as to the difficulty which this organization has experienced in holding its members. Among the anthracite coal miners we find, until the last four or five years, a similar difficulty in holding the men in the union. Here the men would join the union in great numbers on the eve of a new settlement, but after its conclusion would fail to pay dues and thus

America (Proceedings, 1907, pp. 36–37), and of the teamsters in New York in 1908, when some 26 local unions withdrew (Proceedings, 1910, p. 83).

[6] Proceedings, 1912, p. 26.

[7] Speech of I. Mesmer, label advertiser for the Tobacco Workers, before the convention of the United Mine Workers (Proceedings, United Mine Workers, 1908, pp. 209–210). The Tobacco Workers' Union was organized in 1895.

[8] Proceedings, 1908, p. 23.

keep up their membership.[9] For instance, in the years 1905 and 1906 the average paid-up membership in the three anthracite districts fell from something over 80,000 to less than 29,000. Among the textile workers and the garment workers likewise can be found numerous instances where great numbers joined the union temporarily but soon dropped out.

It is evident, therefore, that one of the fundamental problems before the labor leader is the placing of his organization upon a firm and stable basis, the devising of ways and means whereby a member, once secured, can be kept in the union and prevailed upon to pay regularly the dues levied upon him. In this chapter we shall inquire into the methods pursued by organized labor for the accomplishment of these purposes.

The workmen of the country, considered in respect to their attitude toward trade unionism, may be divided into three general classes: (1) positive unionists, (2) negative unionists, (3) anti-unionists. In the first class we may include the pioneers in trade unionism, the leaders in the movement, and all those who join their union and remain in it without any other inducement than their belief that it will prove an effective means of promoting their industrial welfare. At the other extreme are those of the third class, who either because of a feeling of personal loyalty toward their employers or for some other reason, into which we need not here inquire, are opposed to the principles or practices of trade unionism. Between these two extremes are those of the second class, the negative unionists, who will give a ready assent to the principles of trade unionism and have no fault to find with its practices, but whose attitude is generally one of indifference; who may be willing enough to join the union when it comes to an outright fight against the employer, but whose union spirit is not deep-seated or constant enough to make them willing to undergo sacrifices, pecuniary or otherwise, after the enthusiasm born of the

[9] See Report of President Mitchell, in Proceedings, 1908, pp. 28–29.

heat of combat has passed away. To this class it is probable that the great majority of workmen belong, a probability of which there is strong evidence in the statistics showing the great number of lapses.

The ideal of trade unionism would be to have every workman in the first class, so that he would foresee the benefits to be derived from united action, realize the necessity of permanent organization in order to make this effective, and willingly undergo present sacrifice in the shape of payment of dues for the sake of future gain. Consequently we have the extensive educational propaganda that is carried on by many trade unions among their members. Over one hundred unions publish journals, weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, in which the attempt is made to keep before their members the activities of the organization and to stimulate their interest in trade-union affairs. Sometimes a subscription price is charged for the journal, but frequently its expenses are paid out of the general fund; no extra charge is made to members for it, and its circulation is thus greatly extended. In addition to the employment of the journal and other occasional literature published in the form of pamphlets, unions endeavor to stimulate interest and to educate their members by means of addresses delivered by national officers and organizers before the local meetings, and by encouraging discussion among members themselves at these meetings.

The success of this plan, if union activities are confined merely to efforts to secure increase in wages, decrease in hours of labor, or improvement in conditions generally, necessitates a highly developed social and class consciousness. Under such circumstances an individual workman has nothing to lose in failing to keep up his membership. The tendency, then, is to avoid the burden of supporting the union as long as an actual conflict is not on. This is well illustrated by the case of the anthracite miners up to 1912. Here great numbers would come into the union upon the eve of a new settlement with the operators, but upon the conclusion of that settlement would drop out.

Probably stronger than the appeal to the union spirit of the individual workman as a means of holding him in the organization is the appeal to his fear of condemnation by his fellow-workmen if he remains outside of the ranks of organized labor. Hence we have the designation of non-union workers by terms of such odious import as "scab" or "rat," the practice of social ostracism against non-unionists, the appeal to class consciousness, and the general attempt to make the non-unionist feel that he is a social parasite, enjoying the fruits of others' sacrifices. Thus in a letter from the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union to the various shop chairmen is found the following declaration: "Any worker who enjoys the benefits of the union and the protocol and does not contribute his or her share of the expenses of maintaining the union is a shirker and is unworthy of any respect or consideration. The obligation of paying dues to the union is not only a constitutional one, but is a moral one as well."[10] The Industrial Workers of the World, who do not seek recognition from employers or attempt to maintain the closed shop or to supply insurance to members, place reliance entirely upon this sort of pressure, together with the education of laboring men in the purposes and ideals of that organization. All unions make some attempt to influence workmen by appeals of this nature, and doubtless they are to some extent an effective means of holding members.

The experience of the Industrial Workers of the World, however, the membership of which has displayed a most decided instability, would not lead trade unionists to put too great confidence in this sort of appeal. Nevertheless, there should be greater possibilities in it than the experience of the Industrial Workers of the World would seem to indicate. If public opinion continues in the future to look with the same increasing favor upon the organization of labor as has been the case in the past generation, it is probable that the

[10] Winslow, "Conciliation, Arbitration and Sanitation in the Dress and Waist Industry of New York City," U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin No. 145, p. 40.

position of the non-unionist will become less and less satisfactory to himself as he finds a growing lack of sympathy with his attitude and an increasing condemnation of his failure to lend his support to his union, the benefits of which he is enjoying. This is one of the reasons why recognition of the union by the employer is important to the organization. With recognition the union obtains a position of some importance in the community. It then stands forth with greater prominence and certitude as the instrumentality whereby the interests of the laborer are safeguarded. Consequently it has a stronger claim upon his support.

Appeals to the union spirit of the workman and to his fear of condemnation on account of failure to belong to the union are helpful means of maintaining the affiliation of members and doubtless function to some extent in all unions. For the purpose of holding a member steadily in the union, however, the most efficacious appeal is the providing by the union for him of some direct, personal advantages of an economic nature, advantages which are apart from those resulting from improvements in the condition of the trade as a whole, but which accrue to him only through continuous membership in the union and which cannot be enjoyed by non-members. An appeal of this nature is provided (1) if membership in the union brings with it personal advantages in the shape of insurance, such as sick, death, disability, old age, and unemployment benefits; or (2) if it protects the individual personally against arbitrary and unjust action on the part of employers or foremen; or (3) if it provides him with increased facility in the securing of employment, as is the case when the preferential union shop prevails; or (4) if failure to keep in good standing in the union disbars him entirely from employment at certain places, as is the case where the closed shop prevails. Each of these methods for maintaining the individual's allegiance will now be considered.

*Insurance.*—It is easy to see how a system of benefits provides a direct appeal to the individual to keep up his

membership in the union. Benefits are paid only to members who are in good standing in the union or who at least are only slightly delinquent in the payment of dues. Consequently a workman desirous of providing insurance for himself or his family must keep his dues paid up regularly; otherwise, the contingency upon which he should become entitled to benefits may happen at the very time when he is disbarred on account of non-payment. Additional inducements to steady payment of dues are offered by the usual provisions of those unions maintaining benefits that individuals shall become entitled to them only after a continuous membership of six months or a year, and by further provisions, which in many cases increase the amount of benefits progressively according to the length of membership. Thus in the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees continuous membership of one year is required before rights to death benefits begin. In the event of death during the second consecutive year of continuous membership, the benefit is one hundred dollars. In the third year it is one hundred and fifty dollars. It then increases gradually each year, so that, in the event of death during the ninth consecutive year of continuous membership, or thereafter, the benefit is eight hundred dollars.[11] Inasmuch as expulsion for only a short period would break the continuity of membership, the individual has a strong personal interest in keeping his dues paid up. The same kind of appeal is offered in the case of old age pensions, the right to which accrues in those unions that maintain them only after continuous membership for a number of years.

Belief in the efficacy of a system of benefits as a device for keeping members attached to the union is widespread. Sidney and Beatrice Webb say: "The benefit club side serves, in the first place, as a potent attraction to hesitating recruits. To the young man just 'out of his time' the prospect of securing support in sickness or unemployment is a greater inducement to join the union, and regularly to

[11] Constitution, 1913, sec. 96.

keep up his contributions, than the less obvious advantages to be gained by the trade combination."[12] Mr. Gompers declares that during periods of commercial and industrial stagnation unions with high dues and substantial benefits do not lose their members, while unions without these features suffer a material loss.[13] In 1907 Secretary Dobson of the Bricklayers and Masons urged that a national system of benefits be adopted by that organization. He said:

> Benefits of such a character will serve as inducements to the non-union men of our craft to associate themselves with us. Mark well what we say! Our organization of to-day will remain intact just so long as conditions of work in our industry remain the same as they have been during the past few years, but just as soon as a real depression comes upon us, our ranks will be depleted to a marked degree, and charter after charter will be returned to headquarters with the statement, "Nothing doing; when better times come around we will again organize and ask for reinstatement." Their falling away will mean no loss or sacrifice to them. . . . All that will be thought of in returning the charter will be "Well, we can get another one when we want it for fifteen dollars."[14]

The secretary of the Teamsters declared that small local unions throughout the country, which rarely went on strike, claimed that they derived no benefits from the organization, and that it was hard for organizers to work in small towns since they had nothing but strike benefits to offer. He thought that a death benefit of one hundred dollars would increase membership twofold, and that it would also have a tendency to make members more regular in attending meetings and would help the secretaries in the collection of dues.[15] Similar expressions from many other sources might be cited.

This general belief among those possessing experience in trade-union affairs as to the utility of benefit features doubtless has foundation in fact. The experiences of certain unions indicate that benefits prove an attractive feature

[12] Industrial Democracy (ed. of 1902), p. 158.
[13] In Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers' Journal, August, 1906, p. 315.
[14] Forty-second Annual Report of Secretary, for term ending December 1, 1907, p. 420.
[15] Proceedings, 1906, p. 142.

to some members. It was reported in 1911 that of the thirteen hundred women members of one large Bohemian local union of cigar makers in New York City, three hundred who had ceased to work in the trade still retained their membership in the organization on account of the benefits provided.[16] In the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' International Union no benefits are paid by the national union, but many local unions have beneficial features. A large number, however, have no benefits, and traveling members are frequently sufferers from this, since in going from one city to another they are often compelled to withdraw from a union that pays benefits and deposit their cards in one that does not pay them. Secretary Dobson asserted in 1907: "There are . . . hundreds of instances where traveling members have petitioned unions in whose jurisdiction they have gone to work, to be permitted to retain their membership in their home union, consenting to pay double dues and assessments in order to be accorded this privilege. This of itself is an object lesson in so far as the value of beneficial features is concerned."[17] It is said by the secretary of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees that some of the members continue to pay their benefit dues even after leaving the employ of the railway company.[18] In 1907 the editor of the Journeyman Barber declared that there was even a tendency in the Barbers' Union to place too much emphasis upon the benefit feature of the union, and he uttered a warning that this should be only an incidental feature. In the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen there are about 18,000 conductors; many of these are also members of the Order of Railway Conductors in order that they may receive protection and benefits from both organizations. President Perkins of the Cigar Makers thinks that high dues and a chain of benefits are an absolutely necessary foundation for a successful

[16] Andrews and Bliss, p. 179.
[17] Forty-second Annual Report of Secretary, for term ending December 1, 1907, p. 422.
[18] Interview with Secretary Rezin Orr, Detroit, September 7, 1914.

trade union,[19] and he cites the statistics of the growth of the International Cigar Makers' Union as evidence of their efficacy. The statistics disclose that before the establishment of substantial benefit features the membership of the union displayed great instability. In 1869 it was 5800; with the panic of 1873 it dropped to 3771, and in the subsequent depression it fell from year to year until it was only 1016 in 1877. Since 1879 and 1880, when the benefit system was established, it is true that membership has from time to time suffered slight declines during periods of depression; but on the whole there has been decided growth and stability. This Mr. Perkins attributes principally to the high dues and the chain of benefits.[20]

So many other influences affect the stability of a union, however, that too much reliance should not be placed upon the display of statistics. Thus, as we have seen, the introduction of the union label in the Cigar Makers' Union practically coincided with the establishment of the system of benefits. It is impossible to determine to what extent each one is responsible for the progress of the union. Moreover, while the Cigar Makers display comparative steadiness in their total membership from year to year, they have had the usual difficulty in preventing the breakup of local unions. In the eleven years from 1901 to 1912, charters were issued to one hundred and ninety-two unions; but during the same period one hundred and eighteen unions, or sixty-one per cent of the number chartered, were dissolved or suspended, or had their charters revoked.[21] This proportion is about the same as in the International Typographical Union, which until recently had no extensive national benefits. Furthermore, the total membership of this union since 1880 has shown a steadiness from year to year about equal to that of the Cigar Makers.

[19] Letter in the International Hod Carriers and Building Laborers' Journal, December, 1904, pp. 13–14.

[20] President Perkins's Report to the Twenty-second Convention, 1912, pp. 1–2.

[21] Ibid., p. 10.

The beneficiary features of the railroad brotherhoods are of especial value as appeals to individuals. In the first place, the members of these organizations are among the most intelligent class of workers, and would naturally be inclined to provide for the future by means of insurance. In the second place, the insurance features of these organizations are particularly valuable to members, since such workmen are usually classed as extra hazardous risks and are debarred by old line life insurance companies and fraternal beneficiary societies. As a matter of fact, a very large insurance business is done by these organizations. In the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen insurance certificates are issued in amounts of from $550 to $2000 for death and total disability. In the twenty-nine years prior to September 1, 1913, the brotherhood had paid to its beneficiaries 23,090 claims amounting to $27,310,677.41.[22] In 1912 out of a total membership of 124,048 there were 117,855 beneficiary members, and the total amount of insurance in force was $157,177,000.[23]

*Protection Afforded.*—A second form of appeal to the individual's direct self-interest is found in the protection afforded to him by the union. By protection here is not meant the safeguarding of the interests of the craft as a whole through the maintenance of a high rate of wages, short hours, and good conditions generally, but the support of the individual in the remedying of any personal grievance which he may experience,—such, for example, as an unjust dismissal, an over-severe or unwarranted disciplining, a failure to accord his seniority due recognition in the making of promotions or assignment of work, and failure to make proper rating or measurement in the payment for

[22] Pamphlet, "132,000 Strong," published by the brotherhood and in use in 1914 for organizing propaganda.

[23] Proceedings, 1913, diagram opposite p. 687. It should be mentioned here that one of the most important advantages of a system of benefits is its effect upon the policy and management of the union. This aspect of the matter, however, can be better treated when we come to a consideration of those subjects in the following chapter.

piece work or to distribute this work equitably. If a union is able to safeguard the interests of an individual in such matters as these, but undertakes to do so only in case he is a member of the organization, it is evident that here again is made a direct appeal to the individual's self-interest, inducing him to remain steadfast in his membership.

The importance attached by some unions to the protection afforded the individual member is evidenced by the form of appeal which they put to non-members in order to secure their affiliation. The secretary of the Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen says that the majority of members when soliciting for new adherents almost invariably attempt to show the beneficial features of the organization; for example, the disability and death benefits. "Lastly," he continues, "they tell of the protective features of the organization, whereby the members have their rights as enginemen protected—how it aims to secure for them a fair rate of compensation for their work and to see that no injustice is practiced upon any member."[24] In an organizing pamphlet put out by the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen the protection afforded is placed first among the advantages accruing from membership. The appeal is as follows: "The Brotherhood offers the protection of its united membership and its treasury to every member of the organization. It provides, through its committees, for arrangement of the terms of service, rules for government and the payment of wages. It insists on the rights of the members being observed and offers the advantages of its protection to its members traveling and seeking employment." The fact is then mentioned that the brotherhood has agreements with railroads representing 180,000 miles of the 220,000 miles of railways in the United States and Canada. These agreements "fix the rates of wages, hours of labor, and general rules governing employment, such as guaranteeing rights in the service, freedom from dismissal without just and good cause, and a fair hearing for every employee charged with

[24] Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen's Magazine, June, 1910, p. 850.

offenses."[25] In the railroad brotherhoods, where no attempt is made to enforce the closed shop, this protection and the elaborate systems of insurance provided are the only direct appeals to the pure self-interest of individuals. Yet these organizations are among the strongest and most stable of all labor organizations in this country. It was declared by Mr. A. B. Stickney, a railroad president, that "the impracticable use made of the discharge has been the vital spark of all brotherhood organizations."[26]

The Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees likewise attaches great importance to the protection which it is able to afford the individual member. In an organizing pamphlet issued recently by this association attention is first called to the work accomplished in the way of raising wages and shortening hours. Then follows a statement of the manner in which the individual is protected. After asserting that working agreements have been established by the association with some two hundred and fifty companies, the pamphlet goes on to say: "Under these agreements grievances are adjusted and many of them provide for arbitration in the event of the failure to agree upon an adjustment, so that today a man belonging to the organization has the co-operation of his fellow-workmen and the benefits of a strong organization to sustain him in the adjustment of any wrong which has been done him by unscrupulous bosses."[27] In this organization also the protection afforded and the benefits provided are the principal advantages accruing directly to the individual. The secretary stated in 1914 that only about fifteen per cent of the members were working under closed-shop agreements.[28] Nevertheless, the union has been able to build up a strong and stable organization, its membership in 1914 being 54,500.[29]

[25] Organizing pamphlet, "132,000 Strong."
[26] Report of the Industrial Commission, 1901, vol. xvii, p. 797.
[27] Organizing pamphlet published by the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees, in use in 1914.
[28] Interview with Secretary Rezin Orr, Detroit, September 7, 1914.
[29] Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, 1914, p. 25.

The Molders afford a good example of the attractiveness to an individual of the protective features of a union, under certain circumstances. The original agreement of the Stove Founders' National Defense Association with the Molders, as laid down in the first joint conference in 1891, provided that the terms of any agreement made should apply only to foundries where a majority of the molders were members of the union. In 1898 an amendment was adopted providing that in case a dispute should occur in a foundry not coming under this original agreement, and in case the foundryman and his employees should not be able to reach an amicable settlement, the matter should be submitted for adjudication to the presidents of the two organizations, or their representatives, without prejudice to the employees presenting the grievance. "From the date at which this clause was adopted," assert Frey and Commons, "any dispute arising in a foundry where union molders are employed has been taken up for adjustment by the officers of the two associations. Moreover, since the clause protects the union molders who bring up grievances from discharge or discrimination while the non-union molders have no official recognition, the latter have from time to time joined the organization in order to get the same protection; so that while in 1891, on account of the majority clause, less than half the foundries were covered by the agreement, at the present time all but three or four of the foundries are covered."[30]

Among the anthracite mine workers and the ladies' garment workers it is also probable that this desire for protection has in recent years had an important influence in keeping the membership of the unions intact. By the agreement formed between the anthracite miners and operators in 1912 provision is made for the establishment of local grievance committees at each colliery. Although no official recognition is accorded the United Mine Workers, in practice these grievance committees are chosen, as far as the miners' rep-

[30] J. P. Frey and J. R. Commons, "Conciliation in the Stove Industry," in International Molders' Journal, May, 1907, pp. 343–344.

resentatives are concerned, by the local unions; and, inasmuch as the committee refuses to concern itself with the grievance of a non-unionist, there is provided in this way a direct personal appeal to the individual to keep up his membership in the union. Since the conclusion of the agreement of 1912, union membership, which previously had exhibited extreme variability, has displayed rapid growth and decided stability. It is true that under the first award of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission in 1903 provision had been made for a board of conciliation—composed of representatives of the operators and, in practice, of the United Mine Workers—in each of the three anthracite districts. At meetings of these boards grievances also could be settled. The boards, however, were too distant for the expeditious handling of numerous petty local grievances, and could not make the same forceful appeal to individuals as could a local committee right under their own eyes, ready to take up their grievances at once.

In the ladies' garment industry, under the various "protocols" formulated since 1910, elaborate machinery has been provided whereby the grievances of individuals can be expeditiously settled. Here too protection is afforded only to members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, and it is probable that the rapid growth and greatly increased stability of this union since 1910 is to some extent due to this protection afforded individual members. In the case of both the anthracite mine workers and the ladies' garment workers, however, it is impossible to speak with any certitude as to the exact extent to which this desire for protection has been responsible for the great growth and increased stability of the two unions, since in both cases a virtually closed shop has in recent years been largely prevalent in each industry, as we shall presently see.

The question now arises as to what are the conditions under which this desire for personal protection functions as a really active force in securing the steady adherence of members to the union. That it is not always effective is

well evidenced by the failure of unions to hold their members in the many cases which have been described. In the first place, in order that this desire for protection may constitute an effective incentive to the individual to keep up his membership in the union, it is necessary that personal grievances occur frequently in the course of employment. In the second place, it is necessary that the union be accorded some recognition by the employers as a proper agency for the settlement of these grievances.

(1) It is without doubt true that in every kind of employment cases arise from time to time where particular individuals feel themselves aggrieved by what they consider arbitrary and unwarranted action on the part of their employers. Therefore, all unions would include among their purposes the protection of the individual and the maintenance of his independence in his relations with his employer. But in certain kinds of employment it would seem that the workman is especially liable to experience such grievances. To specify these employments with any degree of particularity would require a detailed knowledge of the technique and organization of each industry. Nevertheless, it is possible to state in a broad, general way those classes of employment which are the most likely to give rise to these grievances.

(a) Where large-scale production obtains, where there is a necessity for the formulation of a complex set of rules for the regulation of the conduct of the employees, and where the interpretation and application of these rules must be left largely in the hands of subordinate officials, it is probable that frequent occasions will arise when the employee feels that he has been too harshly dealt with for some alleged violation of the rules of the company. Such a condition as this necessarily prevails upon the great railroad systems of the country. According to statistics compiled by Mr. Kruttschnitt, at the time general manager of the Southern Pacific Railroad, for the six months ending June 30, 1900, 1519 out of a total of 10,513 employees on

that road subject to discipline were actually disciplined. Of these 233 were merely reprimanded, 1073 were suspended for various periods from five to sixty days—the greatest number, 565, being suspended for ten days—and 212 were discharged. The causes of disciplining were as follows: negligence causing damage to property, other negligence and neglect of duty, improper billing and handling of freight, failure to report for duty, intemperance, failure to give or obey signals, insubordination, improper train dispatching, overlooking train orders, failure to report accidents, carelessness in making reports, carrying freight beyond or short of destination, carrying passengers without leave or transportation, incivility to patrons, dishonesty, and unsatisfactory services.[31]

It was asserted by a high official of one of the railroad brotherhoods that if all of the rules of the companies were strictly enforced at all times it would be impossible to carry on the business of the roads.[32] Therefore, an apparent case might at times be made out for the disciplining of any employee. Under these circumstances it is clear that a large amount of discretion must lie in the hands of the officials whose duty it is to interpret and apply these rules. To be protected against an abuse or an incompetent application of this discretionary authority is evidently to the interest of each employee. Such protection is afforded by a strong brotherhood which insists that, if there has been what appears to be an unjust decision in the case of one of its members, a hearing shall be held so that the employee's side of the case may be stated; and which furthermore takes upon itself, through the employment of its trained representatives, the presentation of the individual's case before the officials of the company. In 1911 the report of the president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen showed that grand lodge officers had taken up the settlement of personal grievances on over fifty railroad systems, involving

[31] Report of Industrial Commission, 1901, vol. xvii, pp. 800–801.
[32] Interview with W. G. Lee, president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Cleveland, September 9, 1914.

from 150 to 200 individuals.[33] This, however, doubtless represents but a small proportion of the number of grievances actually handled by the brotherhood, since most of them were probably dealt with by the general committees on the various systems without the need of appeal to the grand lodge for assistance.

Where conditions such as those just described obtain, and where the field for employment open to the individual is more or less restricted, or where a discharge by one employer may prove a severe handicap in the securing of employment with another, it is probable that the desire for protection will prove especially strong. Thus where monopolistic or semi-monopolistic conditions prevail, as in the street railway systems of various cities and in the telegraph industry of this country, security of tenure in his position must be a matter of far more vital importance to the employee than in the case of a man in such industries as the building trades, where, as a rule, a shifting from one employer to another is a process of constant recurrence. In the former cases, if an employee is discharged, he loses all the rights that accrue from seniority, and may either have to change his residence from one city to another in order to obtain employment at the same kind of work, or may be quite unable to obtain such work if satisfactory reference from a previous employer is denied. Among the grievances reported by the president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen in 1911 was one of a member who, after dismissal from one railroad, obtained in succession positions on two other roads, but in each case was subsequently released on account of unsatisfactory references.[34]

(b) It would seem that protection should be especially valuable to the individual where a piece-work system prevails and where the nature of the work is such that he is likely to suffer injustice in the fixing of the price for the

[33] Proceedings, 1913, report of president for years 1911 and 1912, pp. 9–50.
[34] Ibid., p. 36.

particular piece of work performed, or in the unequal distribution of work. President White of the United Mine Workers said in 1912 that he had heard anthracite mine workers complain that they did not know what the rates were; that the companies took advantage of the men; and that if they could only get the published rates at all of the collieries, it would mean a great advance to some of the men.[35] According to the statement of the statistician of the same union, the miner was frequently told by the mine boss that the work which he was doing was a new class of work for which no scale of wages had been fixed. It was a long-standing abuse that reductions in the pay of the miners had been brought about in this manner.[36] It was the opinion of these officers that great advantages would accrue to the miners from the agreement of 1912 because it was there provided that a schedule of rates should be printed and a copy thereof placed in the hands of every mine worker. Furthermore, the individual was protected in the enforcement of this schedule through the establishment at every colliery of a mine committee by which individual grievances could be taken up with the management.[37] The members of the railway brotherhoods engaged in train service are paid according to a piece-work system. Wages are mostly on a mileage basis, rates being expressed in terms of cents per mile, with a guarantee, however, of payment for a certain number of miles per hour for the time spent at work. Under this system disputes frequently arise as to the proper interpretation of the schedules of rates. If an individual is not allowed as high a compensation as he thinks he deserves for some particular run, it is to his advantage to have the backing of the brotherhood in securing the return to which he is entitled.

[35] Pamphlet published by United Mine Workers on "Negotiations of Anthracite Coal Operators and Anthracite Mine Workers," 1912, p. 50.

[36] Ibid., p. 64.

[37] Pamphlet published by United Mine Workers on "Negotiations of Anthracite Coal Operators and Anthracite Mine Workers," 1912, p. 64.

In the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union we have an example of the value of protection to the individual against discrimination in the distribution of work. It is said that in the cloak, suit, and skirt industry in New York City, before the "protocol" of 1910, the employer depended upon the foreman to distribute work in his department as best suited him. "This method or rather the evils growing out of this method, constituted one of the foremost contentions of the employees."[38] At times discrimination was made on account of race or family. Some men were permitted to work the entire day and far into the night, and others who were reporting each day to the factory were refused employment. Under the protocol the shop chairman is responsible for an equal distribution of work, and it becomes his duty to report to the employer any discrimination on the part of the foreman or superintendent.

In the nine months from December 12, 1910, to September 11, 1911, 160 of the 998 cases which came before the board of grievances established by the protocol dealt with such discrimination in the distribution of work.[39] In the dress and waist industry in New York City from January 18, 1913, to January 1, 1914, the number of grievances arising on account of unequal distribution of work was 395 out of a total of 4472.[40] Inasmuch as the union will not take up the grievance of a non-member, it is clear that here membership in the union is a direct personal advantage to the individual.

(2) The second fundamental condition that must be present in order that the desire for protection may induce an individual to remain in the union is the recognition of the union by the employer, either through formal agreement or

[38] Conciliation, Arbitration and Sanitation in the Cloak, Suit, and Skirt Industry in New York City, Bulletin No. 98, U. S. Bureau of Labor, p. 248.

[39] Conciliation, Arbitration and Sanitation in the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Industry in New York City, Bulletin No. 98, U. S. Bureau of Labor, p. 230.

[40] Conciliation, Arbitration and Sanitation in the Dress and Waist Industry of New York City, Bulletin, U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Whole No. 145, p. 100.

through tacit assent, as the proper agency for effecting the settlement of personal grievances. Until the union is accorded such recognition, the only way in which it can secure redress for grievances is through the calling of strikes. Now, if grievances were to arise frequently, it would mean that the unionists must spend most or all of their time on strike—an obviously impossible state of affairs. On the other hand, if grievances seldom arose, the first of our fundamental conditions would be lacking, and the actuarial value of the protection afforded the individual would be too slight to constitute an inducement to him to pay his union dues. In all of the cases which we have considered in this connection a virtual recognition has been accorded the union by the employer. In the case of the relationships established through the several protocols between the various branches of the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and the associations of manufacturers, we have an example of thorough-going recognition, formal and expressed, with the provision of elaborate machinery for the settlement of grievances. In the anthracite mining industry we have under the agreement of 1912 a provision of machinery for the settlement of grievances, although a formal recognition of the United Mine Workers as a party to the contract is denied. Here, however, the union is now recognized in all but name. As a matter of fact, the mine committees provided for are simply committees of the local unions of the United Mine Workers, and their activities as agencies for the redress of grievances are exerted only in behalf of accredited members of that organization.

*The Preferential Union Shop.*—The third form of appeal to the direct self-interest of the individual is the provision for him of increased facility in the obtaining of employment because of his membership in the union. This inducement is secured through the preferential union shop. The best example of this device is to be found in the relationships of the various branches of the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union with manufacturers' associations under the several

protocols which have been agreed to in the industry. The essence of the arrangement in this industry lies in the agreement that in the hiring of help the employer shall always give the preference to members of the union, when these can be obtained, and also that preference shall be given them in retaining help during the dull season. There can be little doubt that the preferential shop has been chiefly responsible for the maintenance of stability in the organization of the Ladies' Garment Workers since 1910, when the first protocol was formed. Prior to that date the union had experienced the widest fluctuations in membership, the ranks at times being depleted to a mere handful of men, and then again being swollen to a point where it required all the energy and foresight of the leaders to maintain discipline.[41] In May, 1910, before the strike which resulted in the signing of the first protocol, the membership in the cloak, suit, and skirt makers' unions in New York City was about 6000.[42] By the end of the strike in September the membership had increased to 40,000,[43] and in February, 1912, it had further increased to 50,000.[44] Since this date six other protocols have been signed in various branches of the industry, and in 1913 the membership had grown to over 100,000.

This strengthening of the union should not be attributed entirely to the preferential union shop, since doubtless the protective features of the union under the protocol arrangement have had an influence in maintaining the membership of the union. But the prime factor seems to have been the preferential union shop. Strong evidence of this is to be found in the experience of the union in the dress and waist branch of the industry in New York City since the signing of the protocol for that branch in January, 1913. Here the success of the union under the protocol has not been so de-

[41] Conciliation, Arbitration and Sanitation in the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Industry in New York City, Bulletin No. 98, U. S. Bureau of Labor, p. 204.
[42] Ibid., p. 205.
[43] Ibid., p. 205.
[44] Ibid., p. 213.

cided as in the case of the cloak, suit, and skirt industry. In the latter branch the union has grown steadily since the signing of the protocol in 1910, and in May, 1914, it was stated that practically all of the shops of the members of the Manufacturers' Association were union shops.[45] In the dress and waist branch of the industry, on the contrary, by April, 1914, the membership of the union had actually declined to about one half of what it had been at the time of the signing of the protocol in January, 1913.[46] "The records of the union show that in 29 of the largest establishments in the industry, many of which belong to the most prominent members of the association, employing a total of 5000 workers, the percentage of union workers is less than 1."[47] The union assigns as the cause of its failure to hold its members the lack of good faith on the part of some of the manufacturers in enforcing the principle of the preferential shop. The Manufacturers' Association admitted the truth of this charge, but seemed unable to compel its members to live up to their obligations.[48] It appears that here the desire for protection was alone not a sufficient motive to induce the members to keep on paying dues. Consequently it seems that we should regard the strict enforcement of the preferential union shop as the most important factor in the growth and stability of the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

The success of the preferential union shop in maintaining the stability of the union is largely influenced by two conditions: (1) the regularity of employment, that is, the frequency with which hiring or discharging occurs; (2) the strictness with which the principle is observed by the employer.

(1) In an occupation in which practically all the employees maintained their positions throughout the entire year,

[45] The Ladies' Garment Worker, May, 1914, p. 16.
[46] Conciliation, Arbitration and Sanitation in the Dress and Waist Industry of New York City, Bulletin, U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Whole No. 145, p. 38.
[47] Ibid., p. 9.
[48] Ibid., pp. 39–45.

where the hiring or discharge of workmen seldom occurred, the preferential union shop might offer small incentive to the worker to keep on paying dues, since the principle of the preferential union shop would not require the discharge of a non-unionist, but simply that he should be the first to go in case reduction in the force became necessary. It is obvious that where such a change rarely occurs the value of membership in the union would be far less to an individual than where the hiring and discharge of workers were matters of quite frequent occurrence, so that the non-unionist might always find himself laid off several weeks earlier than the union workers, and also several weeks behind them in the obtaining of new work. Here the superior advantages enjoyed by the unionist should prove a strong incentive to remain in the union. The ladies' garment industry is just such an industry as this, and thus the preferential union shop finds here the most favorable opportunity to demonstrate its efficacy as a means of bringing stability to organization.

(2) As experience in the dress and waist industry has shown, it is absolutely essential to the success of the preferential union shop as a method of maintaining the stability of the union that the employer should support the plan in good faith, that he should as a matter of fact show a real preference for unionists in the hiring and retaining of help. Where the employer, following out the terms of the protocol that those who desire the benefits of the union should share in its burdens, has not only shown the stipulated preference to unionists but has also used his influence in getting the members to pay their dues, there has resulted practically a union shop.

Sometimes we find that, although no agreement exists between the employer and the union in regard to the employment of unionists, in practice preference is given by the employer to members of the union. It was stated by the secretary of the Metal Polishers[49] that in many shops, where

[49] Interview with Secretary Charles R. Atherton, Cincinnati, August 27, 1914.

no closed-shop agreement existed, union men were always given the preference and only such were employed. Under these circumstances no attempt is made by the union to force an agreement for the closed shop. A similar state of affairs is found in most of the stove foundries working under the agreement of the Stove Founders' National Defense Association with the Molders' Union. Here there is no formal agreement for the closed shop, and the various conferences of the association and the union have avoided that question. In course of time, however, the manufacturers have come to favor organization because the union was thereby better able to maintain discipline in the enforcement of agreements. Consequently in nearly all of these foundries preference is given to union men, and thus the shops have come to be thoroughly unionized.[50]

*The Closed Shop.*—The fourth and most effective method of maintaining membership intact through a direct appeal to the individual's self-interest is the closed shop. A closed shop may be defined as a shop in which "union men refuse to allow non-unionists permanently to retain employment."[51] It is not necessary to inquire here how the closed shop is established. It is sufficient to say that it may be brought about by a gradual winning over of the workmen into the union, or that the employer may be persuaded to establish it voluntarily, or that it may be secured in spite of the employer's opposition through the use of the various devices which were discussed in Chapter II.[52]

Our concern at present, however, is with the efficacy of the closed shop as a device for holding members in the union. The essence of its importance in this respect lies in the fact that it substitutes the shop for the individual as the unit of organization. When a shop has once become union or closed, the individual workman must keep in good standing with the union if he wishes to retain his employment.

[50] Frey and Commons, Conciliation in the Stove Industry, pp. 346–347.

[51] Stockton, p. 11.

[52] For a further discussion of the methods of establishing the closed shop, see Stockton, Chapter VI.

Ordinarily an employer, once having granted a closed shop, will discharge a non-unionist upon the request of the organization. If he refuses to do so, a strike may result. Now it is, of course, possible that all of the employees in a closed shop might decide simultaneously that it was useless to continue paying dues to the union. Under such circumstances, the closed shop might fail as a means of holding members in the union. However, it can easily be seen that in a shop employing anything more than a very small number of men this is not likely to happen. If the unionizing has been brought about, not by any effort on the part of the employees themselves but by outside pressure, such as we have seen to have been the case with some of the mill workers and overalls workers, the same pressure which caused the employer to unionize his shop in the first place is likely to cause him to keep it unionized. On the other hand, if an organization has been formed through the efforts of the employees themselves, it is not likely that a concerted effort will be made to break away from it. Individuals may lapse in their ardor from time to time, but the pressure of the majority will suffice to hold them in line. After a time, membership in the union comes to be looked upon as a matter of course for those working in the closed shop.

The attitude of the average workman toward his union in regard to the payment of dues is exactly analagous to that of the average citizen toward the government in regard to the payment of taxes. Although there are comparatively few anarchists in our midst, and although it is generally recognized that revenue is essential for the fulfillment of the governmental functions of the state, nevertheless no reliance can be placed upon the voluntary contributions of individuals. Witness, for example, the universal breakdown of the personal property tax, where the declaration of the amount of personal property has been largely a matter of the individual's own volition. The most respectable citizens make no pretense of paying taxes on the full amount of their property, each one feeling that his own contribution

would be an undue burden when others generally are avoiding the tax. But, on the other hand, where the tax falls with certainty upon every one, as in the case of an excise or import duty, no attempt is made to get rid of the burden, although a concerted effort by a majority of the citizens could successfully accomplish this relief. Likewise in trade unions, provided none of the appeals to the individual's direct self-interest which we have considered are present, organization might break down if the payment of dues were left to each workman's individual volition; whereas no such results would be brought about if the avoidance of dues required the concerted action of a considerable group, just as no general attempt is made to abolish taxation, although the average individual, acting alone, will avoid taxes wherever he can. At the convention of the United Mine Workers in 1912 a delegate, speaking on a resolution concerning the establishment of the closed shop in a certain district, declared that the miners in that section who were organized would not pay dues, but openly admitted that they would pay if they were checked off.[53] Under the closed shop the maintenance of the union depends upon the collective rather than the individual will.

The efficacy of the closed shop as a device for maintaining stability in membership can be clearly seen in the experience of various unions. The United Brewery Workmen, embracing in their jurisdiction a large proportion of unskilled workers and maintaining no national system of benefits, display a decided stability in membership, there having been an uninterrupted increase from 2000 in 1889 to 62,000 in 1912. The secret of this steadiness is doubtless to be found in the fact that the union has adopted the policy of organizing the breweries as industrial units rather than that of organizing individual workmen. The historian of the union, in describing the great struggle of the brewery

[53] Proceedings, 1912, p. 962. The "check off" is an arrangement whereby under closed-shop conditions union dues are collected through the employer by being deducted from wages.

workmen with the brewery owners in 1888, enumerates a number of instances where the organization was built up through the formation of agreements with employers, that is, through the organizing of the breweries. Later on is found this significant statement: "In other places where organizations still existed, and where union rules were partly enforced without a contract [providing for a closed shop], a disposition showed itself to neglect the payment of dues, and this led to the neglect of the union on the whole."[54] At the present time the brewery workmen are probably the most strongly organized group in this country, and practically all of the members of the union are working under closed-shop agreements.

Among the garment workers also we can see the effectiveness of the closed shop in the maintenance of stability. As Andrews and Bliss have stated in their "History of Women in Trade Unions," organization in the overalls trade has on the whole proved the one permanent success for women's unions in the men's garment trade.[55] Now it is in just these unions that the policy of organizing the shop rather than the individual has been carried out to the greatest extent, inasmuch as in many of these factories the employers themselves have been chiefly instrumental in bringing about and maintaining union shops in order that they might use the union label.

Possibly the clearest evidence of the utility of the closed shop in maintaining membership is to be found in the experience of the United Mine Workers. In August, 1911, the check-off system was prevalent in the coal mines of at least fourteen different States; namely, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania (bituminous districts), Kentucky, Tennessee, Iowa, Michigan, Kansas, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Montana, and Wyoming.[56] On the other hand, the agreements with the anthracite mine operators included in

[54] Schlüter, p. 169.
[55] P. 170.
[56] F. A. King, "The Check-Off System and the Closed Shop among the United Mine Workers," in Quarterly Journal of Economics, vol. xxv, p. 735.

what are known as Districts 1, 7, and 9 provided explicitly for the open shop, while in Alabama and West Virginia no agreements of any consequence had been obtained. A study of the union membership in these various districts readily discloses the fact that the districts in the former group have exhibited in practically all cases either a constant or an increasing membership from 1900 to 1911, while the districts in the latter group have without exception shown extremely great fluctuations in membership. For example, in District 9, in December, 1901, the membership was over 23,000, but in December, 1902, it had fallen to 3679; by 1905 it had risen again to over 27,000; but by 1911 it had fallen again to less than 4000. This district, it must be remembered, as well as Districts 1 and 7, belongs to the anthracite coal field where the operators have exerted no compulsion on the men to leave the union, but where the men, as Mr. Mitchell has said, have been absolutely free to join the union or not as they wished.

Since the agreement of 1912, membership in the anthracite districts, as we have seen, has shown a decided growth and stability. This has been attributed partly to the increased desire of individuals for personal protection under the newly established agencies for the settlement of grievances. A large share of credit, however, should be given to the closed shop. It is true that the anthracite agreement provides for the open shop; but as a matter of fact closed-shop conditions have come to prevail at many collieries. This has been brought about largely by the so-called button strikes. Members of the union in good standing are provided with buttons, and in many instances these union miners have refused to work with those not wearing buttons. At the 1914 convention one of the delegates from District 7 stated that more than one hundred of such button strikes had occurred in his district during the previous year.[57] Moreover, the operators have gradually come to look with less disfavor upon the closed shop, and in many cases,

[57] Proceedings, 1914, p. 261.

rather than submit to the inconvenience of a strike, will compel their employees to wear buttons. Thus we have practically the closed shop.

The union or closed shop is at once the most widely employed as well as the most effective device of American trade unions for the purpose of maintaining stability in membership. It is true that it is not employed by the four railroad brotherhoods, or by the Railroad Telegraphers, or by several lesser organizations;[58] but for the great majority of unions it must be given the foremost place among the factors which cause a steadfast adherence of members to the organization. It would be interesting to know the number and proportion of trade unionists working under closed-shop conditions, but no exact investigation of this has ever been made. The writer, in the course of interviews with officers of various national unions during the summer of 1914, made inquiries for the purpose of securing this information. The replies received represent simply off-hand estimates and so cannot be regarded as exact. Nevertheless, they may give some idea as to the prevalence of the closed shop, and thus help to account for that degree of stability which trade unions on the whole exhibit. The estimates given, showing the proportion of union members working under closed-shop conditions, are for unions selected at random and may be considered as fairly representative. They are as follows:

| Union | Per cent |
|---|---|
| Street and Electric Railway Employees | 15 |
| Retail Clerks | 50 |
| Longshoremen | 60 |
| Teamsters | 70 |
| Painters and Paperhangers | 75 |
| Blacksmiths | 80 |
| Tailors' Industrial Union | 80 |
| Lithographic Press Feeders | 85 |
| Cigarmakers | 90 |
| Carpenters | 90 |
| Bookbinders | 90 |
| Barbers | 95 |

[58] Stockton, p. 31.

In the following unions it was stated that all or nearly all of the members worked in closed shops: Bricklayers and Masons, Brewery Workmen, Cloth Hat and Cap Makers, Glass Bottle Blowers, Glove Workers, United Hatters, Lace Operatives, Plumbers, Stage Employees, Stone Cutters, Typographical Union, Window Glass Workers, and Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers.

In many cases a closed shop prevails to all intents and purposes although no express agreement to that effect may exist. The editor of the Molders' Journal stated that none of the agreements of that union provided specifically for the closed shop; but as, where agreements existed, the employer would generally give the preference to the union man, the conditions practically amounted to the closed shop.[59] The strict observance of the preferential union shop among the Ladies' Garment Workers has, as we have seen, led in many cases to the same result. Often, although no closed-shop agreement exists with the employer, unionists will refuse to work with non-unionists, thus bringing about closed-shop conditions in practice. The president of the Longshoremen's Union stated that in that organization in New York City, with having about 6000 members, there was no closed-shop agreement with the employers, but that the men would refuse to work with a non-union man or a man who would not pay dues.[60] The secretary of the United Garment Workers stated that this condition existed in many clothing factories.[61] The same condition prevails also among the Stove Mounters, who have no regular closed-shop agreements.[62] It was in this way, as we have seen, that the closed shop has been instituted among the anthracite coal miners.

It may safely be asserted, therefore, that not only do the great majority of American trade unions make use of the device of the closed shop, but also that in these unions the great majority of the regular members are working under the conditions imposed by this device.

[59] Interview with John P. Frey, Cincinnati, August 26, 1914.
[60] Interview with T. P. O'Connor, Buffalo, September 10, 1914.
[61] Interview with B. A. Larger, New York, September 14, 1914.
[62] Interview with Frank Grimshaw, Detroit, September 8, 1914.

## CHAPTER IV

### The Management of the Union

It has been seen that the organization of labor is not a wholly spontaneous process; that it is brought about on a large scale only through constant agitation and appeal; that various devices must be employed to overcome the opposition of the employer; and that even after workmen have once been brought together in unions, a vast problem still remains in making stable and permanent the organization thus achieved. Since this is the case, it is evident that the success of the unionizing movement is largely influenced by the extent to which efficiency in the management of the union is realized.

*Personnel of Management.*—No proper conception of the cause of the strength or weakness of a particular union can be obtained unless we take into account the degree of general ability, honesty, and good judgment with which the organization is managed. For instance, we cannot explain the total lack of organization in the packing houses of Chicago at present unless we bear in mind the strike of the employees in those houses in 1904. At that time, while arbitration proceedings over a dispute were pending, the management of the union foolishly permitted the members to go on a second strike on the grounds of discrimination against unionists,—a procedure which led to a long and bitter struggle, the alienation of public sympathy from the union, a disruption of the organization in the packing houses, and a loss in the membership of the union of over 28,000. On the other hand, we shall not succeed completely in accounting for the success achieved by such unions as the Molders or the United Mine Workers unless we take into consideration the managerial ability of officers like Martin Fox or

John Mitchell, with their persistent efforts towards the promotion of collective bargaining and their firm insistence upon strict adherence to all contracts.

Efficiency in the personnel of management, moreover, is important not only in the case of the national officers but also in that of the local officers. In 1908 the general organizer of the Textile Workers stated that it had become increasingly difficult to obtain efficient officers; and he asserted that there was no doubt that organizations could be formed in many branches of the industry provided efficient business agents could be supplied.[1] The organization committee of the general executive board of the Bakers and Confectioners reported in 1909 that many small local unions ceased to exist as soon as the organizer left them, chiefly because of the lack of capable officers to carry on the business of the union.[2] The secretaries of the Car Workers[3] and the Brick, Tile and Terra Cotta Workers[4] declared that the greatest difficulty they had in organizing foreigners was in obtaining competent leaders of their own race who could gain their confidence.

*The Need for Supervision of Local Unions.*—Frequently the reports of officers of unions refer to the break-up of local unions through the dishonesty of their officials. Probably the most striking instance of this is contained in the report of the secretary of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees in 1905. Speaking of the causes of retrogression in the union during the preceding year, he said:

> First and foremost, the greatest evil that we have to contend with is dishonesty. Officers to the number of over two hundred have been accused, and in the major portion, found guilty of embezzlement of the funds of as many locals. Some of the unions have been scorched several times, and all without exception suffer, while a large number have quietly laid [sic] down and ceased to exist. Reasonable allowance is made for other causes of numerical decrease,

[1] Proceedings, 1908, p. 51.

[2] Proceedings of the fifth session of the general executive board, in Bakers' Journal, April 17, 1909, p. 3.

[3] Interview with G. W. Gibson, secretary, Chicago, September 1, 1914.

[4] Interview with William Van Bodegraven, secretary, Chicago, September 4, 1914.

but the flagrant dishonesty of financial and other officers, as well as members who hold no executive position in our locals, is actually responsible for better than two-thirds of the falling off in membership, and the setting forth of scandalous stories that have been used to the disadvantage of organizers who sought to perfect locals in territory contiguous to where such things happen.[5]

The secretary of the Hod Carriers' and Building Laborers' Union in several reports refers to the dishonesty of local officers; he gives this as the principal cause delaying the advancement of the organization, declaring that dishonest officers not only disrupt a local union, but make future organization doubtful.[6] An editorial in the journal of the Barbers' Union asserts that, according to reports of organizers, a representative sent to a local union on the verge of disruption to try to save it finds the books in horrible condition in practically every case.[7]

Another frequent cause for the break-up or weakening of local unions is reckless and unsuccessful striking. It was asserted by the secretary of the National Building Trades Council in 1902 that it seemed to be the opinion of some newly instituted organizations that the only thing necessary to bring an employer to terms was to call a general strike, and that these unions, unprepared and undisciplined, and at times unreasonable or unjust in their demands, invariably lost the strike and in the end disrupted their own and other organizations.[8] In 1905 the secretary of the Sheet Metal Workers attributed the decrease in total membership in that union during the preceding year largely to ill-advised strikes. Other officers in this union have also from time to time called attention to the evil effects of indiscriminate striking.[9] The officers of the Molders' Union have constantly pointed out the disorganizing effect of such striking, and have strongly insisted upon the necessity of good discipline. In 1875 the president declared that strikes in violation of the

[5] Proceedings, 1905, p. 15.
[6] Proceedings, 1906, p. 62.
[7] The Journeyman Barber, April, 1911, p. 81.
[8] Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers' Journal, November 15, 1902, p. 178.
[9] Proceedings, 1905, p. 341.

union rules always ended in defeat, and he attributed the failure of many national organizations to their lack of good discipline.[10] In 1886 the president asserted that independent strikes were one of the great drawbacks to the welfare of the union.[11] In the early history of the union, before a firm system of discipline had been developed, such statements are often found in the reports of officers. In 1902 the president of the Molders reported that fourteen hundred members in Chicago, contrary to the rulings of the national executive board, had gone on an independent strike. He admitted that as a result of the strike an increased wage had been obtained in some thirty or forty foundries, but declared that there were some six or ten others, among them the largest and best in the city, which had been lost and were then being operated as non-union shops.[12] During the industrial depression following the panic of 1873, local unions of the Cigar Makers entered recklessly upon strikes to prevent reductions in wages, without the international union having authority to restrain them. In three years the union lost sixty-seven local unions and nearly three thousand members, emerging from the depression with only seventeen local unions and a membership of about one thousand.[13]

It is probable, however, that the great majority of local unions fall to pieces simply from inanition. The union is started under the influence of an organizer's persuasiveness or under the stress of some grievance. With the settlement of the grievance, the need for organization is no longer felt; with the departure of the organizer, the union is left to shift for itself. Its members are probably unaccustomed to conducting such bodies, and wise leadership, which above all things is necessary, may or may not be present. Some members may be anxious to strike for improved conditions at once. If they triumph, the results which have just been depicted are likely to follow. On the other hand, if a

[10] Iron Molders' Journal, September, 1875, p. 425.
[11] Proceedings, 1886, pp. 8–9.
[12] Proceedings, 1902, p. 614.
[13] T. W. Glocker, "Government of American Trade Unions," in Johns Hopkins University Studies, ser. xxxi, no. 2, p. 111.

policy of inactivity is adopted, many are likely to lose faith in the union as an effective means of bettering their condition; interest wanes, meetings are unattended, dues are not paid, and the union goes out of existence.

It is desirable, therefore, that newly established local unions should not be thrown entirely upon their own responsibility at once. Education in the principles, aims, and methods of trade unionism, encouragement in the work of building up the local union before making demands for better conditions, instruction concerning the duties of members as such or concerning the rules of the organization and the proper methods of conducting the union—for example, the manner of keeping accounts, and the correct procedure in the handling of grievances—all these may prove valuable means of preventing the disintegration of inexperienced local unions. Something may be done in this connection when the union is first installed, if that work is performed by a regular officer or a representative of the national union. Further instruction may also be provided through literature published by the national union. For instance, the Metal Polishers issue a little pamphlet of some forty pages, entitled "Know your Union." It is published especially for new members, and contains instructions along the lines mentioned above. But far more effective than any printed instructions would be a personal visit from time to time from a representative of the national union, whose contact with the new members might not only serve to instruct, but also to stir up interest and enthusiasm. The secretary of the United Textile Workers, an organization which has found it especially difficult to maintain the integrity of its local unions, asserted in 1903 that, if there had been occasional visits from some official representative, many of the local unions that went out of existence through want of education, encouragement, and instruction would have been saved.[14] Statements of a similar nature are found in the literature of other unions such as the Bakers and Confectioners, the Barbers, and the Hod Carriers.

[14] Proceedings, 1903, pp. 14–16.

*The Value of a Strong National Union.*—For protection against the dishonesty or irregularity of local management, for the prevention of indiscriminate and often disastrous strikes, and for encouragement and instruction to struggling local unions, a strict supervision by the national union provides a valuable means. The officers of the national body, being selected from a wider range of choice than are the local officials, may naturally be expected to possess greater competence than the latter. They are men who have had experience in trade unionism; they have a wider outlook; they are not so likely to be carried away by their feelings as are local officers under the stress of a grievance; and they are better qualified to take into consideration the conditions in their trade or the state of industry as a whole before entering upon any contest with an employer. Moreover, if they are paid regular salaries so that they can devote their entire time to trade-union affairs, they develop a facility and expertness in dealing with employers that may be woefully lacking in the local officials. Thus the president of the United Textile Workers warns local unions against taking too much responsibility upon their own shoulders in regard to trade agreements, signing up wage scales, or acting on disputes with employers without first consulting the international union. "Many disputes," he says, "that have appeared serious at times have been amicably settled by the efforts of our Internationl Union when those of the local union had failed."[15]

As national unions have increased in power, the supervision exercised by them over local unions has constantly tended to increase in strictness and in extent. The attempt is made to prevent dishonesty or irregularity in the local finances by the requirement, in some cases, of periodical auditing by local committees of the books kept by local officers.[16] In some unions the supervision has gone still further, provision being made for the audit of local books by regular national officers. This, for example, is done by the

[15] Proceedings, 1910, p. 18.
[16] Sakolski, p. 146.

Cigar Makers, the Molders, the Barbers, the Teamsters, and the Bakers and Confectioners. The great majority of national unions also endeavor to exercise some degree of supervision over their local unions in regard to the calling of strikes. A recent writer states that one hundred and thirteen national unions make some attempt to regulate strikes. Eighty-one of these maintain a control only over strikes supported by the funds of the national union,[17] while twenty-nine of them require that no strikes, whether supported from local or national funds, may be declared without the consent of the national authorities.[18] The regulations of the Molders afford us a good example of the stricter sort of supervision. Before a local union of this organization may enter upon a strike there must be a three-fourths vote of the members present at a local meeting in favor of striking; then the grievance must be submitted to the international president, who must investigate either personally or by deputy; if no settlement is secured in this way, the matter must be submitted to the international executive board before a strike may be declared; if a strike is entered upon without the approval of this body, it is considered sufficient provocation for suspension from the international union at the option of the president and the executive board.[19]

Something is also done by national unions in the way of assistance and encouragement to struggling local unions. As was pointed out in an earlier chapter, the work of national organizers is not confined to starting new local unions, but partly consists in visiting established local unions and helping them to solidify and extend their membership. In 1887 the secretary of the Railroad Trainmen reported that the preceding year had been spent in visiting and instructing subordinate lodges rather than in organizing new ones.[20] The reports of most organizers show that a part of their time is spent in such work.

[17] Glocker, p. 112.
[18] Ibid., p. 116.
[19] Constitution, 1912, art. vii, sec. 2.
[20] Proceedings, 1887, p. 18.

In addition to these important regulative and supervisory functions of the national unions, such central bodies perform other invaluable services in organizing new local unions, in maintaining stability in organization, and in overcoming the employer's opposition. Since these topics have been discussed fully in the preceding chapters, it is necessary in this connection simply to point out briefly the utility of a strong national union in accomplishing such purposes. The national union, as we have seen, provides an agency under the direction and financing of which means can be provided for the extension of organization in places where unions may not spring up spontaneously. It may also provide a national insurance system that should prove a more attractive feature to many individual members than does local insurance, since, under the latter system, the large number of those who travel from city to city usually lose their rights to benefits until they have been members of the new local union for a period of six months, more or less. Then again, although the protection afforded, or the closed shop maintained, under a system of independent local unions might constitute no less effective inducements to the individual to join the union and maintain his membership therein than the same features provided through the national union, nevertheless the latter provides a more efficacious instrument for accomplishing these purposes of trade unionism in that it possesses greater power in combatting the opposition of employers. Thus strikes may be better financed through a national union than through separate local unions. Here the national union possesses the same advantage that a central reserve bank possesses in a banking system. Resources can be pooled and expended at the point where the greatest need exists. For example, the United Mine Workers spent over $400,000 for strike expenses in Alabama for the year December 1, 1907, to November 30, 1908, although the membership of the union in that State[21]

[21] Proceedings, 1909, Report of Secretary.

was at the time less than 3000. Finally, under a system of independent local unions the undue multiplication of boycotts or union labels would weaken the utility of both of these devices as methods of overcoming the employer's opposition.

*The Cost of Secessions.*—The tendency in the trade-union experience of this country, as regards the form of organization, has been toward the dominance of the national union. There is at present in the United States no trade or industry which has been organized to any extent in which no national union exists. But some national unions have experienced considerable difficulty in securing the affiliation or preventing the secession of various local organizations. For instance, this has been especially true of the Teamsters, the Hod Carriers, the Textile Workers, and the Longshoremen.

The history of the organizing of the teamsters is replete with accounts of secessions of local unions from the national organization. The original national organization of the teamsters was known as the Team Drivers' International Union. The charter to this union was issued by the American Federation of Labor in January, 1899, there being eight local unions at the beginning. The formation of other local unions took place very rapidly. At the convention of the union in 1901, however, the Chicago local unions protested against the admission of team owners (that is, owners of more than one team) and against an increase in the per capita tax from five to twenty-five cents. As a result of the disallowance by the convention of these protests, the first important secession of the teamsters took place. A dual organization was formed, known as the National Teamsters' Union, which made great headway, obtaining, it was claimed, a membership of some twenty-five or thirty thousand members in four or five months. Through the good offices of the American Federation of Labor the two organizations succeeded in uniting again in 1903 and forming a

new organization, the present International Brotherhood of Teamsters.[22]

In 1906 in the convention at Chicago the second important secession occurred. Thirty-nine local unions from New York, Chicago, St. Louis, and several other cities, with a membership of over 8000, seceded and formed the United Teamsters of America.[23] At about the same time Local Union No. 85 of San Francisco stopped paying its per capita tax. This union was not brought back into the international union until 1910. Its importance is shown by the fact that at this time it had a membership of approximately 2000 and resources of about $95,000.[24] In December, 1908, an agreement was approved by the executive board of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, whereby the seceding United Teamsters of America became reaffiliated with the international union. But all was not peaceful and harmonious yet. Shortly before this there had been another revolt of some local unions in Chicago, which formed an organization called the Chicago Teamsters and Helpers.[25] In New York also at about this time another revolt occurred. According to a report of Vice-President Hoffman in 1910, there were as many as twenty-six seceding local unions in this city, with an aggregate membership of at least 8000 teamsters. Mr. Hoffman was successful in getting these unions to reaffiliate with the international union,[26] but in August, 1914, the Chicago Teamsters, with a membership of about 9000, were still unaffiliated.[27]

Among the hod carriers and building laborers of the country there have been, in addition to the national union recognized by the American Federation of Labor, two other organizations of some importance. With three national unions in the field competing for jurisdiction, none of great

[22] Magazine of International Brotherhood of Teamsters, August, 1906, p. 19.
[23] Proceedings, 1907, pp. 36–37.
[24] The Teamsters, June, 1910, p. 3.
[25] Proceedings, 1910, pp. 24–33, Report of President.
[26] Ibid., p. 83, Report of Vice-president.
[27] Interview with Daniel J. Tobin, president, Indianapolis, August 28, 1914.

power, and thus unable to add enough to the strength of a local union to make it worth while for the latter to burden itself with a per capita tax to the former, a great number of the local unions, particularly those that are largest and strongest, have preferred independence to affiliation with any national union.

While we have no statistics in regard to the total number of independent hod carriers' and building laborers' unions, nevertheless we can be reasonably certain that they have been numerous and important. In March, 1907, the president of the Hod Carriers and Building Laborers' International Union reported that there were in New York, Brooklyn, and Manhattan something like twenty-two independent unions of hod carriers. Out of this number he had been successful in affiliating with his own organization only eight.[28] At the convention of the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor in 1909, where it was being urged that there should be a reorganization of the hod carriers so as to get all of them into one national union, the secretary of the committee on the president's report stated that there were large organizations of hod carriers in industrial centers from New York to San Francisco which were not affiliated with the international union; that one of these on the Pacific Coast had $55,000 in its treasury; and that the independent local union in Chicago had 14,000 members. The president of the Hod Carriers and Building Laborers' International Union, who was present, did not deny these statements, but said that the international organization had been unable to secure the affiliation of these local unions.[29]

In the case of the United Textile Workers and of the Longshoremen there has been considerable difficulty in preventing secessions and in securing the affiliation of all of the local unions in the crafts. It has been stated: "One difficulty which besets the textile workers lies in contentions

[28] Official Journal [Hod Carriers and Building Laborers], March, 1907, p. 15.

[29] Proceedings, Building Trades Department, 1909, pp. 65–70.

between different branches of the trade. If a local becomes dissatisfied with the national management, or, as national officials believe is often the case, if it is unwilling to pay assessments, it is easy for it to secede."[30] In October, 1910, the secretary of the union reported that since the convention of 1906, when the membership of the union was 13,569, about 6000 members had seceded for one cause or another.[31] In 1907 it was reported that there had been two important withdrawals from the Longshoremen. One of these was that of the Marine Firemen, Oilers, and Watertenders, Local No. 124, with a membership of 2300. The other was that of a number of local unions on the Pacific Coast, which formed the Longshoremen of the Pacific,[32] representing a membership, it was claimed by one writer, of about 10,000 men.[33] In 1909 the reaffiliation of the latter unions was secured; thirty-eight unions on the coast received charters from the international union.[34] The Longshoremen have also experienced difficulty in securing the affiliation of various independent organizations.

Practically all unions have had secessions at times or have been unable to secure the affiliation of certain independent unions. Where such difficulties are frequent, however, organization must suffer. We are not considering here the evils which arise from open conflicts, but simply such as result from failure to combine all local unions of a craft in one national union. Organization suffers because the national union, embracing only part of the organized workers of the trade or industry, is weaker than it might be, and thus its efficiency as an agency in supplying the factors just discussed is impaired. For it is apparent that the stronger the national union, the greater are its possibilities in the way of sending out organizers, supervising local unions, and

[30] Andrews and Bliss, p. 176.
[31] Proceedings, United Textile Workers, 1910, p. 20.
[32] Proceedings, International Longshoremen's Association, 1907, pp. 26–27.
[33] Proceedings, 1909, p. 107.
[34] Proceedings, 1910, pp. 23–24.

combatting the opposition of employers, all of which methods are desirable for the rapid extension and stable maintenance of organization.

The four unions which have just been considered have all been handicapped in the work of organization by lack of adequate funds. For instance, there were in 1910 over 780,000[35] teamsters in the United States. For the twenty-six months from July 1, 1910, to September 1, 1912, there was spent by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters $63,064.22,[36] for salaries of general officers and organizers and other organizing expenses, which may be considered as expenses for organizing and supervision. In contrast to this, the United Mine Workers, whose jurisdiction embraces an approximately equal number of workmen,[37] spent during the two years, December 1, 1910, to December 1, 1912, $482,190.22[38] on salaries and expenses of officers and organizers, which may also be considered as expenses for organizing and supervision. Now during this period the average membership of the Teamsters was approximately 45,000, while that of the United Mine Workers was 250,000. It is obvious that the latter needed a far larger sum for purposes of supervision, but that there was, on the other hand, just so much less need for organizing work. It is evident, therefore, that there is plenty of opportunity for greatly increased expenditures on the part of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Consequently, for the purpose of extending organization, it is eminently desirable that every substantial, existing union contribute its due portion of revenue. The failure of the Chicago Teamsters, with 9000 members, to affiliate with the International Brotherhood and pay the per

[35] L. Wolman, "Statistics on Trade Unions, 1910," in Appendix to Quarterly Journal of Economics, vol. xxx, no. 3, p. 620.

[36] Proceedings, 1912, Report of Secretary, pp. 37–41.

[37] The total number of coal employees in the country was only about 640,000. However, there are a very considerable number of teamsters working in small towns where there would not be enough to form a local union. Therefore, roughly speaking, we are not far from correct in speaking of the number subject to organization as approximately equal to the number of coal employees.

[38] Proceedings, 1912, and 1913, reports of the secretary.

capita tax of fifteen cents per month deprives the latter of a yearly revenue of over $16,000, part of which might be used for extending organization in other cities besides Chicago.

*High Dues and Reserve Funds.*—A national union realizes efficiency in performing the functions which have been set forth as desirable for it to perform, not only in proportion to the ability possessed by the personnel of the management and the extent to which it is successful in securing the support of existing local organizations, but also in proportion to the amount of revenue which it is able to secure for the purpose of carrying on its work. In fact, as will be pointed out, the provision of adequate financial resources for the national union is an invaluable means of securing good management and a united national organization. Recognition of the desirability of high dues and a large reserve fund is widespread among trade-union leaders. Mr. Gompers and other officials of the American Federation of Labor have repeatedly urged such a system. President Perkins of the Cigar Makers declared in 1914 that high dues and a chain of benefits are an absolutely necessary foundation for successful trade unionism.[39]

Practically all of the activities of the national union that have heretofore been considered—the employment of regular paid officials, such as organizers, adjusters, and auditors; the publication of literature; the provision of benefits; the financing of strikes; the advertising of the union label; the entering into competition with an employer—require the expenditure of considerable sums of money. It is not possible to state what is the minimum revenue on which a national union can be conducted with proper efficiency. This would vary with the conditions which each trade has to meet. It is certain, however, that the revenue of many national unions is insufficient to enable them to perform adequately the functions which it is desirable for them to undertake. For instance, according to the 1914 report of

[39] Letter in International Hod Carriers and Building Laborers' Journal, December, 1904, pp. 13–14.

the American Federation of Labor, only 73 of the 110 national unions affiliated with that organization pay insurance benefits of any sort, and many of these are exceedingly small in amount. Unions with a small revenue like the Hod Carriers, the Longshoremen, and the Teamsters, with a monthly per capita tax of only fifteen cents, sometimes complain that they are unable to answer all the calls for organizers because of a lack of adequate funds. In the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers the per capita tax to the national union is thirty cents per month, fifteen cents of which goes to the death and disability fund, leaving a like amount for all other purposes. In his report in 1913 the secretary of this union declared: "The revenue of the General Office is not adequate. Our efforts to more thoroughly organize the trade, to assist locals struggling for better conditions are hampered, often frustrated, by lack of funds."[40] Insufficient financial resources, therefore, may be said to interfere with those activities of the national union which are desirable for bringing new members into the organization, for maintaining stability, and for overcoming the opposition of employers.

Moreover, a union with large resources is less likely to suffer from the evils of poor managerial ability or from lack of unity and discipline than a poverty-stricken organization. It is true that many capable leaders have devoted their services to labor organizations with little or no compensation; but, with large resources, a union is better able to keep on hand an adequate staff of trained officials or to provide local unions with efficient management through subsidized business agents. The International Typographical Union employs a number of "representatives" for the purpose of investigating disputes of local unions with their employers and of adjusting such difficulties. A number of these are expert officials receiving regular salaries. For the year June 1, 1913, to May 31, 1914, the total expenditures

[40] Reports of General Officers to the eleventh convention, 1913, p. 59.

for these purposes was $35,032.89.[41] Attention has already been called to the fact that the Molders subsidize the business agents of their Conference Boards, and that the same policy has been followed to some extent by the Teamsters, the Hotel and Restaurant Employees, the Pattern Makers, and the Metal Polishers. In 1899 the Machinists adopted the practice of paying half of the expenses of local business agents. In 1903 thirty of these agents were employed at an average cost to the international union of about $1300. In spite of its cost, this system was considered by the union as a profitable investment, for, as President O'Connell stated in his report for 1903, "in nearly every instance where a business agent is in the field our organization is active, energetic, and our membership has been at least permanent, if it did not show signs of increase."[42] In 1911 the president reported that for the preceding two years the grand lodge had paid fifty per cent of the salaries and expenses for fifty-one local business agents at a cost of $69,460.17.[43]

It has been pointed out in another connection that the general organizer of the Textile Workers asserted that it was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain efficient officers, and that no doubt organizations could be formed in many branches of the industry provided efficient business agents could be supplied. He went on to say that, under the system of the Textile Workers as it then (1908) existed, it was impossible to supply business agents. He thought that an increase in the revenue of the national organization was desirable in order that such officials might be placed in charge of local unions.[44] Probably much might be done in the way of preventing the disintegration of many local unions if efficient business agents could be supplied or partly supported by the national union until the local union had obtained sufficient resources to support an agent alone, or

[41] Reports of Officers, International Typographical Union, 1914, pp. 19–20.
[42] Sakolski, p. 107.
[43] Report of President, in Machinists' Monthly Journal, October, 1911, p. 974.
[44] Proceedings, 1908, p. 51.

had at least become adequately instructed and had been sufficiently seasoned to manage its affairs without any paid agent at all. Inadequate financial resources must always hinder a union in such a policy.

A large reserve fund in the hands of the national union also provides the most efficacious method of maintaining discipline and solidarity in organization. Where there is a large national reserve fund, to threaten a local union with expulsion for an illegal action carries real weight, since, if the expulsion takes place, the local union loses its rights to any interest in that reserve fund. Under a strongly centralized system of finance, the Molders have finally achieved very strict discipline. In 1907 the president of the union stated that the term 1902 to 1907 showed a "history replete with striking illustrations of staunch discipline under the most trying circumstances."[45] At the following convention in 1912 he reported that for the term 1907 to 1912 discipline had been more nearly perfect than ever before in the history of the union.[46] In the early history of the Molders, however, before the national union possessed adequate financial resources and was able to guarantee authorized strikers sufficient benefits, this organization was frequently troubled with unsanctioned strikes.[47] President Perkins of the Cigar Makers declared in 1904 that before the establishment of a system of high dues his union was constantly involved in strikes of varying success, but that at that time, with a reserve fund of $500,000, there were few strikes.[48]

A large reserve fund also exerts a strong influence in preventing secessions of disaffected local unions from the national body, and is likewise an attraction to independent unions to affiliate. For these reasons President Keefe of the Longshoremen urged upon the members of his union

[45] Proceedings, 1907, p. 14.
[46] Proceedings, 1912, p. 14.
[47] See "History of the Union," by J. P. Frey, editor, in International Molders' Journal, July, 1909, pp. 443, 444.
[48] Letter of G. W. Perkins to Secretary Stemburgh of the Hod Carriers, in the International Hod Carriers and Building Laborers' Journal, December, 1904, pp. 13–14.

that they establish a system of high dues. He cited the cases of the withdrawal in 1907 of the Marine Firemen, Oilers, and Watertenders with a membership of 2300, and of the Longshoremen of the Pacific at about the same time; and declared that the difficulty was that, with the small financial resources of the national union at that time, there was little inducement to make it worth while for these unions to maintain their affiliation, and similarly there was no inducement for independent organizations to come in.[49]

It should be noticed that the four unions which were discussed as being especially troubled in preventing secessions or in securing the affiliation of independent unions, namely, the Hod Carriers, the Longshoremen, the Teamsters, and the Textile Workers, are all unions with comparatively low per capita taxes and small resources. Before 1907 the highest per capita tax paid to the United Textile Workers was fifteen cents per month. At the convention in that year it was provided that the per capita tax for unions chartered subsequent to this should be twenty cents per month.[50] In the other three unions the per capita tax has never been over fifteen cents per month. The balances in the treasury have also been small. On September 30, 1913, the balance of the Hod Carriers was $29,467.18;[51] on July 1, 1914, that of the Longshoremen was $29,811.95;[52] on September 30, 1914, that of the Textile Workers was $1253.17.[53] In October, 1913, the balance in the national treasury of the Teamsters was $118,182.57,[54] but before July 1, 1910, the reported balance had never been as much as $25,382.71,[55] the amount which it reached on that date. Compare this with a per capita tax of twenty-two cents per week[56] paid by the Molders and a balance in the treasury of that union on June

[49] Proceedings, Longshoremen, 1907, pp. 25–28.
[50] Constitution, 1907, rule xi, sec. 2.
[51] Quarterly Report, International Hod Carriers and Building Laborers' Union, July, August, and September, 1913.
[52] Proceedings, 1914, p. 37.
[53] Proceedings, 1914, p. 42.
[54] The Teamsters, October, 1913, back cover.
[55] Proceedings, 1910, Report of Secretary.
[56] Constitution, 1912, art. vi, sec. 3.

30, 1912, of $487,761.23;[57] or with the balance of the Typographical Union, amounting to a total of $929,355.80 on May 31, 1914.[58]

*Benefit Systems.*—One of the chief advantages to be found in a system of benefits maintained by the national union is its influence in increasing the strength and the disciplinary powers of the central body. This has been well expressed by Sidney and Beatrice Webb: "In a strong and well organized union, the existence of important friendly benefits may become a powerful instrument for maintaining discipline among the members, and for enforcing upon all the decisions of the majority. If expulsion carries with it the loss of valuable prospective benefits, such, for instance, as superannuation, it becomes a penalty of great severity. Similarly, when secession involves the abandonment of all share in a considerable accumulated balance, a branch momentarily discontented with some decision of the majority thinks twice before it breaks off in a pet to set up as an independent society. Thus the addition of friendly benefits has been, on the whole, a great consolidating force in Trade Unionism."[59]

The existence of a good system of insurance benefits is also a force making for conservatism. A large reserve fund in the hands of the national union provides it, as we have seen, with an effective weapon for enforcing discipline over the local unions. However, a union with a large reserve fund but with no benefit system is not likely to be so conservative as a union with important benefit features. In the former case the fund may seem, as the Webbs say, to be "eating its head off, so to speak. The men become im-

[57] Proceedings, 1912, p. 92.

[58] Report of Officers, International Typographical Union, 1914, p. 18. The membership of these unions in 1913 was as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Hod Carriers | 19,687 |
| Longshoremen | 22,000 |
| Teamsters | 52,622 |
| Textile Workers | 20,000 |
| Molders | 50,000 |
| Typographical Union | 55,614 |

[59] Industrial Democracy, 1902, pp. 158–159.

patient to use it; so a demand is made on the employers, irrespective perhaps of the circumstances of the trade. A strike follows. The members live on their fund for a few weeks, and when it is exhausted they give in."[60] On the other hand, under a system of benefits, members feel that they have other advantages accruing from membership besides the obtaining of better wages and better working conditions from their employers. They know that they will lose these benefits if the funds of the organization are dissipated in strikes. Consequently they tend to be less hasty in making demands upon employers. The statistics for the International Cigar Makers' Union,[61] given below, show that as the expenditures of the union for various insurance features increased, those for strike purposes have, on the whole, declined. The figures are given for the total of the first ten years for which they were available and for the last ten.

TABLE II

COST OF STRIKE AND OTHER BENEFITS IN THE CIGAR MAKERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION

| Years | Cost of strike benefits per member | Cost of all other benefits per member[62] | Total cost per member for all benefits |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1879–1888..... | $33.23 | $19.80 | $53.03 |
| 1902–1911..... | 12.60 | 87.19 | 99.79 |

One of the principal objections made to elaborate systems of benefits is that they tend to make the union too conservative in its trade policy. Thus Secretary William Mosses of the United Pattern Makers of Great Britain, speaking upon this subject before the Pattern Makers' League of North

[60] Industrial Democracy, pp. 159–160.

[61] These statistics were calculated from the Report of President Perkins to the Twenty-second Convention, 1912, p. 19. There is an error in this report. The cost per member of strike benefits for the year 1887 is given as $6.74. It should be $0.674. Allowance for this has been made in my calculation.

[62] "All other benefits" include sick, death and total disability, and out-of-work benefits. For the first two years covered in the above statistics there were no sick or death and total disability benefits. There were no out-of-work benefits for the entire ten years of the first period.

America, said: "We had a delegate meeting of our society last July and we sat there in session for nine days and there was not a single minute of that time devoted to discussing or improving the conditions of employment; the whole time of that meeting was spent in considering the question of contributions and benefits, and in trying to devise how we could lower our contributions; not a single word was said as to improved conditions of employment so far as the trade in Great Britain is concerned, and that is the danger of all organizations who cater to beneficial features."[63] In the United States, however, it would seem that there are few unions that have fostered their beneficial features to such an extent as to make this danger a pressing one.

*Jurisdictional Disputes.*—Finally, in order that trade unionism may realize its maximum efficiency in the work of extending and stabilizing organization through the exercise of the various functions which we have been considering, it is desirable that none of the energies or resources of organized labor be dissipated through internal discord and controversies. Here we come upon the evils of the so-called jurisdictional disputes, to which, assert the Webbs in speaking of English experience, is due nine tenths of the ineffectiveness of the trade-union world. In this country also there can be no doubt that these disputes have been widespread and of frequent occurrence. A recent writer on jurisdiction in American building-trades unions has analyzed the cost of such disputes to trade unions under three headings: (1) loss of money, (2) impairment of organization, (3) the creation of hostile public opinion.[64]

(1) Often the direct monetary loss to unions involved in lengthy jurisdictional controversies is a very important item of expenditure. The United Association of Plumbers reported in 1908 that it had spent about $53,000 in a fight with the Steam Fitters in Toronto.[65] The Elevator Constructors, a union with about 2000 members, estimated that they had

[63] Proceedings, Pattern Makers, 1913, p. 64.
[64] Whitney, p. 125.
[65] Ibid., pp. 126–127.

spent about $75,000 in less than ten years for these disputes.[66] Exact statements of cost are difficult to obtain since unions do not differentiate these expenditures in their accounts, but utterances of union officials convey the impression that in many unions the money losses due to jurisdictional disputes are heavy. In addition to the losses involved through the direct outlay of money, there should also be taken into consideration the indirect loss resulting from the wasted time and energy of union officials in handling these controversies. For instance, the secretary of the Teamsters asserted in 1902 that for the preceding year one half of his time had been taken up in settling jurisdictional disputes.[67] No one can read the proceedings and journals of the Amalgamated Association of Sheet Metal Workers without feeling that a considerable part of the time of the officers of this union must be taken up in adjusting the numerous jurisdictional disputes with which the organization is afflicted.[68] All the money and energy expended by trade unions in attempting to settle these disputes mean just that much loss in their efficiency in overcoming the opposition of employers, in establishing new organizations, or in providing the requisite supervision or carrying out the necessary policies for the maintenance of stability in organization.

(2) Jurisdictional disputes also tend to destroy the solidarity of the trade-union movement. From the reports of President Tobin we get a vivid idea of the havoc which has been wrought in the organizing of the teamsters through the numerous dual union controversies among these workmen. Speaking of the independent local unions in Chicago, Mr. Tobin said: "In February, 1911, Organizer McArthur was shot in the office of the milk wagon drivers' union, by,

[66] Whitney, p. 127, note.

[67] Proceedings, 1902, in Team Drivers' Journal, September, 1902, p. 12.

[68] In 1911 the secretary of the Sheet Metal Workers, speaking of the inability of the organizers to devote much of their time to the actual work of organizing, said that one of the ways in which their energies had been diverted was in fighting the numerous jurisdictional disputes (Proceedings, 1911, in Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers' Journal, September, 1911, p. 367).

in my opinion, a hired assassin. There have been armed bands of the worst kind of lawbreakers representing the dual organization going around the district of Chicago beating our men off wagons, threatening them in their homes, and in every other disgraceful and unchristian-like manner attempting to disrupt our union in that district."[69] In New York City, he reported, conditions were nearly as bad as in Chicago. "It was a continual struggle for our unions to obtain better conditions because of the fact that the representatives of the independent union in New York and vicinity were always ready to present a wage scale asking less wages than our membership desired."[70] Again in 1910 he stated: "For the past two years it has been at certain times almost a death struggle in our organization, continual fighting, continual wrangling, continual splits, mainly brought about by former officers of this organization."[71] Dr. Whitney asserts that "as the result of jurisdictional controversies, local unions frequently refuse obedience to their national officers, local building trades councils seat and unseat delegates regardless of the commands of the national Building Trades Department, and the city federations defy the American Federation of Labor."[72] It is obvious that by this friction the efficiency of trade-union machinery must be materially lessened.

Sometimes we see the evil results of these disputes more concretely displayed. For instance, in 1912 the largest local union of the Sheet Metal Workers, Number 11 of New York, with a membership of 2500, was destroyed as a result of a jurisdictional controversy with the United Brotherhood of Carpenters.[73] Commenting on a jurisdictional dispute in Denver, originating between the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters in 1909, President Kirby of the Building Trades Department

[69] Proceedings, 1912, pp. 9–12.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Proceedings, 1910, p. 33.
[72] Whitney, p. 129.
[73] Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers' Journal, December 19, 1912, p. 453.

said, "The result of the fight has been the almost complete disorganization of one of the best organized cities in the United States, and a condition created that has held us up to ridicule throughout the country."[74]

(3) A consequence of jurisdictional disputes of probably as evil influence as the two which have just been considered is their harmful effect upon public opinion.[75] Public sympathy may go out to a group of mine or textile workers whose grievances are real or who are known to be struggling simply for a "living wage," and a powerful and conservative organization may have the respect of the public, but the public has little sympathy or respect for men who impede industry simply because they cannot come to any understanding among themselves as to who is to do a certain kind of work, when all that the public is interested in is that the work shall be done by somebody. The ordinary business man, not concerned with the underlying causes of these disputes or appreciating the difficulty of settling them, looks upon them as due to the contentiousness of union agitators; and inasmuch as the operations of industry are through them needlessly interrupted, he finds therein a justification of his opposition to trade unionism as it is conducted.

As a refutation of the foregoing contention in regard to the injurious effects of jurisdictional disputes it will not suffice to point out the fact that in the building industry, where such disputes are most frequent, some of the unions are among the strongest in any industry. In the first place, there is still considerable room for growth in the building-trades unions. It has been calculated that only about sixteen per cent[76] of those working in the industry are members of unions, and that even the Bricklayers and Masons, which is

[74] Whitney, p. 134.

[75] Attention has already been called to the influence which public opinion may exert in bringing about the settlement of a strike or in determining the legality of the boycott. In a later chapter a more thorough analysis of the effect of public opinion on organization will be attempted. For the present, however, suffice it to say that it is a factor of great importance.

[76] L. Wolman, "Statistics on Trade Unions, 1910," in Quarterly Journal of Economics, vol. xxx, no. 3, p. 612.

one of the strongest unions, have enrolled as members only about forty per cent[77] of those working at the trade. Of course the control over the industry exercised by these unions is much stronger than such figures would indicate, since many of the non-members are inferior workmen whose competition has little effect upon the members of the union, and many others are scattered about in rural districts where there is little or no attempt to bring about organization. Nevertheless, as is evident from the expressions of officers of such unions as the Sheet Metal Workers, the Painters, and the Hod Carriers, there is still a large field for organization in these trades; and this is obviously also true of some of the others that are less well organized. Even the Bricklayers and Masons have considerable opportunity for further organizing in the South, where the union is much weaker than it is in the northern States.

In the second place, it should be remembered that in many respects the workers in the building industry are among the most advantageously situated of all workers for the purpose of effecting organization. The explanation of this leads to an anticipation of some of the analysis that is to follow; but for the sake of clearness it should be stated that the workers in the building industry possess the following important advantages for organizing: (1) most of the workers are skilled mechanics; (2) the workers are not highly specialized, and hence possess greater mobility; (3) the great majority of the employers are comparatively small capitalists; (4) the employer as a rule cannot stand a long stoppage of work and, therefore, most strikes are short; (5) the sympathetic strike can be employed with facility. The presence of these great positive advantages, operating in one direction, prevents us from perceiving clearly the operation in the other direction of the relatively minor factor, jurisdictional disputes. Nevertheless, this is no reason for declaring that this element is of no importance and that it has had no effect in hindering the more rapid growth of organization.

[77] Wolman, Statistics on Trade Unions, 1910, p. 618.

The influence of this factor could be best perceived if, following a much used method for the study of economic causes, we could go to what may be called the margin of organizability, that is, to that union which is just hovering between life and death, and notice the effect of jurisdictional disputes here. Such a union, however, it would in practice be impossible to pick out. The best that we can do is to consider some union that lies more or less close to the margin. The Teamsters answer fairly well for this purpose. Here the laborers are unskilled and have not enjoyed the same advantages in the way of sympathetic support as have the trades in the building industry, although they have suffered, as we have seen, through the giving of this support to others. Of over 780,000 teamsters in the United States in 1910 only something over 68,000 or 8.8 per cent were organized. The description which has been given of the incessant turmoil and continuous internal dissensions within the Brotherhood of Teamsters would seem to show that these disputes have had an important influence in hindering the growth and stability of the union, and would help us to account for the low percentage of organization among the teamsters as a whole.

# CHAPTER V

## The Employees in the Trade or Industry

In seeking to explain the differences in the extent of organization among various classes of workmen account must be taken of two fundamentally important sets of factors. In the first place, there are certain subjective factors, that is, certain characteristics of the workmen themselves, which affect materially the success which is met with in the attempt to bring about organization. On the other hand, the securing of organization is largely influenced by what may be called objective factors, that is, the conditions under which the laborer carries on his work, such as the size of the business in which he is employed, or the technical development of the trade or industry in which he is engaged. In the present chapter we shall be concerned with the former set of factors, that is, the characteristics of the workmen themselves, which cause the peculiar difficulties met with in organizing certain classes of workers.

It is a well-known fact among students of trade unionism that the greatest success in organization has been among skilled workers, and that attempts to organize the unskilled workers, if not failures, have at least been far less successful than attempts to organize the skilled. The Industrial Workers of the World bring this as one of their principal indictments against trade unionism; and Dr. Wolman, after an exhaustive investigation of the extent of organization in the United States in 1910, came to the conclusion that the great bulk of organization in that year was to be found among the skilled workers, and that the low percentage of organization in industry as a whole was to be attributed to the inability of labor unions to organize the unskilled. An examination of the extent of organization among women

in industry leads to the conclusion that here also there has been a problem of especial difficulty in the way of organizing. Thus, according to Dr. Wolman's figures, although the percentage of organization in industry as a whole was 5.5, 6.8 per cent of the men engaged in gainful occupations were organized, but only 0.9 per cent of the women.[1] Moreover, when we compare the extent of organization of men and women in particular occupations, we find that with few exceptions the organization of the women is below that of the men.[2] Then again, we find from time to time statements of trade-union officials that organization in the South is comparatively weak. In this case the problem is principally that of the negro laborer. Finally, trade unionists seek in many instances to explain the failure to organize certain industries by the presence in them of large numbers of immigrants, the organizing of whom presents, they claim, a problem of great difficulty.

It is evident that none of these classifications of workers—unskilled, female, negro, or immigrant workers—is exclusive of all the others. Unskilled workers make up the majority of the other three classes, and many female workers are immigrants. For this reason it is best not to attempt the analysis of the organizability of each group separately, since to do so would involve much wearisome repetition. But, bearing in mind the requisites for successful organization which have heretofore been considered, it seems advisable to point out the more important characteristics which it is desirable that workmen should possess if organization is to make the greatest progress, and at the same time to

[1] L. Wolman, "The Extent of Labor Organization," in Quarterly Journal of Economics, vol. xxx, no. 3, p. 499. Making deduction from the total number of persons engaged in industry of certain persons because they are not readily susceptible of organization, Dr. Wolman comes to the conclusion that of those persons, male and female, whom trade unions are making some attempt to organize, 18.4 per cent were in unions, of the females only 4.1 per cent. Deductions were made for such persons as employers, farm laborers, domestic servants, clerks, and so on, and for males under 20 years of age and females under 16 (ibid., p. 504).

[2] Ibid., pp. 514–515.

show to what extent these characteristics are lacking among workers who belong in one or more of the four above-mentioned groups.

Before proceeding with this discussion, however, it should be noted that the strategical situation of unskilled workers for the purpose of industrial warfare is on the whole decidedly less favorable than that of skilled workers. The success of a union in enforcing its demands depends upon the extent to which it has control over the labor supply in its particular occupation, since, if an employer is easily able to fill the places of those on strike, it is evident that the whole movement fails in its purpose. But the ability of the union to maintain this control is greatly affected by the extent of the sources from which the necessary labor supply can be drawn. In a trade such as that of the stereotypers and electrotypers, where there are only a few thousand workers in the entire country, all highly skilled and permanently attached to their craft, it is a comparatively easy matter to secure effective control over the labor supply. The number to be organized is small, and when organization is once effected there are no outside sources from which a new labor supply is quickly available. When we come to the lowest types of unskilled labor, however, such as the common laborer, and especially the so-called "floating laborer," the difficulties in obtaining control are enormously multiplied. Here the sources of supply for any particular industry are numerous. There are no sharp limits to the number of men available for any one kind of work, but there is a sort of common pool from which various industries may be supplied. The common laborers employed in railroad construction, in irrigation work, in lumber camps, on the docks, in the mines, in the steel plants, or on the farms do not constitute a clearly defined class in each instance, but may be, and to a considerable extent are, shifted from one industry to another as the necessity occurs. In order, then, for a union to obtain control over the labor supply in any one of these industries comparable to the con-

trol exercised by a union like the Stereotypers and Electrotypers, it would be necessary to organize not merely the one industry, but the hundreds of thousands of laborers engaged in all the industries.

The sources of supply are still further widened in the United States by the constant flow of immigrants, most of whom—in the case of the more recent immigration from southern Europe—were agricultural laborers in their native lands and work as unskilled laborers in this country. Of the 7,048,953 immigrants admitted during the twelve years from 1899 to 1910 and reporting an occupation, 35.9 per cent were laborers, and 23.4 per cent were farm laborers.[3] These immigrants may in the course of time make good unionists, but at first they usually are ignorant of trade unionism, and thus leave open for the employer a large source of non-union labor.

It is true, however, that in any contest with employers, unskilled laborers, though standing in an inferior strategic position as compared with skilled workmen, may under certain circumstances be able to put the employers to considerable inconvenience and thereby gain concessions. If several thousand unskilled workers should go out on strike, without doubt an employer would ultimately be able to supply their places much more easily than would usually be the case with a strike of an equal number of skilled workers. Nevertheless, even in the case of unskilled workers it might be several weeks before the employer could bring his working force up to its full complement. In the great strike in the packing houses of Chicago in 1904 it was asserted that it was the skilled cattle butchers making fifty cents an hour who were the first strikers to be replaced. This was done by bringing in these workmen from the branch houses of the great packing companies in other cities. It was declared, however, that the products handled by the so-called unskilled men were allowed to go to waste because the packers could not find experienced workers to care for

[3] Reports of the Immigration Commission, "Statistical Review of Immigration 1820–1910," S. Doc. No. 756, 61st Cong., 3d Sess., p. 96.

them. The strike was in progress some six weeks before the packers were able to open their smoke houses, the laborers in which are supposed to be unskilled.[4]

From the standpoint of organization, therefore, it is particularly desirable for unskilled laborers that the employer shall find it necessary to end the strike quickly. In this respect it would seem, for example, that such unskilled workmen as longshoremen and teamsters must possess an advantage over unskilled laborers in the iron and steel industry. The report of the United States Commissioner of Labor for 1906 shows that of the 5665 establishments in which strikes occurred in freight handling and teaming from 1881 to 1905, the average number of days closed per establishment was only 6.5; while of the 1219 establishments in which strikes occurred in the iron and steel industry, the average number of days closed per establishment was 39.5.[5] In each case practically an equal percentage of the strikes were successful.[6] Now, during these years the union in the iron and steel industry embraced only skilled workers, so that it is evident that the strategical disadvantage under which the freight handlers and teamsters labored on account of their lack of skill was compensated for by the necessity on the part of the employers of bringing about a quick settlement of the strike; but the unskilled laborers in the iron and steel industry, acting alone, would labor under both disadvantages.[7] It has already been noted what a superior position

[4] Official Journal [Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen], December, 1904, pp. 3, 4, 7.

[5] Twenty-first Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1906, p. 47.

[6] Ibid., p. 81. In freight handling and teaming the strikes succeeded in 25.49 per cent of the establishments in which they occurred; in the iron and steel industry they succeeded in 25.12 per cent.

[7] Of course it must be borne in mind that we can draw no hard and fast line between skilled and unskilled workers, that between the common laborer and the highly skilled artisan there are workmen with various gradations of skill and experience, and that the greater the degree of skill and experience, the less pronounced become the above-mentioned strategical disadvantages. Because, however, of the extreme difficulty of making any practical estimates of degrees of skill, no attempt will be made here to enter into this refinement of the discussion.

the garment workers occupy in this respect in comparison with the textile workers.

Although unskilled workers have frequently been able to force concessions from their employers, it has proved a difficult matter to build up strong, stable organizations among them. We have classified workmen in regard to their attitude toward trade unionism as positive unionists, negative unionists, and anti-unionists. An examination of the experience of unions that have to deal with large numbers of unskilled, female, or immigrant workers shows that, on the whole, these workers should be grouped among the negative unionists; that is, they are not steadfast unionists as a matter of principle, nor are they actually opposed to organization, but their attitude is characterized rather by ignorance and indifference. Speaking broadly, we may say that ordinarily they are not much interested in organization, but that frequently, when some particular grievance arises, they will join the ranks of the unions by hundreds and thousands. The difficulty in organizing them seems to be not so much to get them into the union as to hold them in it.

Attention has already been called to the fact that the Maintenance of Way Employees initiate thousands of men into their union whom they are unable to hold; that the same thing is true, although to a lesser degree, of the Tobacco Workers; and that the principal difficulty with the Teamsters has been their inability to hold together the many local unions which they form. All of these unions are made up principally of unskilled workmen. Among the Textile Workers also we have seen that upon numerous occasions thousands of workmen have gone on strike and for a time perhaps have swelled the ranks of the union. Little permanent organization resulted, however, and the union of the Textile Workers is still very weak. We have also observed like occurrences among the Garment Workers. Here also organization is very often only temporary. In 1908 Secretary Larger stated that annual strikes occur among the tailors with about five thousand union and non-

union men on strike. On each occasion of a general strike large numbers of tailors join the union merely because of the general strike, but pay only one month's dues. The next year finds them again on a general strike for the same improved conditions they struck for the previous year and apparently won. Nine tenths of the new members who are secured in such annual strikes drop out, Secretary Larger says, and never pay more than fifty cents dues.[8] Although by no means all of the textile or garment workers are unskilled, a great number of them are in this class. In both of these industries a large proportion of the workers are women and immigrants. One of the characteristics noticed by Andrews and Bliss in their study of organization among women was "the great and sudden fluctuations in membership found in the statistics of women in unions."[9] In the anthracite mining industry about forty-five per cent[10] of the workers are unskilled, and here also the number of immigrants employed is very large. In an earlier chapter were given statistics showing how the membership of the union fluctuated in the anthracite districts from 1900 to 1911. President Mitchell said in 1908 that there was no discrimination against members of the union, and that the action of thousands of them in leaving it or in refusing to become members of it was due entirely to apathy and indifference, supplemented by a fallacious belief that it was necessary to establish a strong organization only on the eve of the expiration of their contract with the operators.[11]

We can now turn to a discussion of those characteristics which it is desirable that workmen should possess if successful organization is to be accomplished, and to a study of

[8] Proceedings, 1908, p. 30.

[9] Andrews and Bliss, p. 142.

[10] According to the thirteenth census (1910), the total number of men sixteen years of age or over employed in anthracite mines was 170,257. Of this number 12,272 were engineers, firemen, and mechanics; 83,156 were miners and miners' helpers; 74,829 were classed as "all other wage earners." This latter group, constituting about 45 per cent of the total, is made up mostly of unskilled workers (Thirteenth Census, vol. xi, p. 29, Mines and Quarries).

[11] Proceedings, 1908, pp. 28–29.

how the absence of some or all of them makes it especially difficult to establish firm and stable unions among the classes of workers whom we have under consideration.

(1) It is desirable that workmen should have the ability to foresee the possibilities of future gains through organization and should be willing to undergo present sacrifice in the expectation of realizing these gains. Many of the advantages obtained through organization do not come immediately, but only after a number of years of continuous pressure exerted upon employers. Therefore, the greater the power of workmen to visualize these advantages and the willingness to pay dues in order to obtain them in the future, the more likely will they be to stick steadily to the union, instead of joining it merely when a strike is on, for the sake of obtaining an immediate advantage. The possession of these qualities depends upon the general intelligence of the worker and upon the permanence of employment in the particular occupation in which he or she is engaged.

As we go down among the lower classes of workers, persons whose education is very limited or whose intelligence is inferior, it is only natural that distant gains to be achieved through organization should make little appeal. Either they are not thought of at all, or they seem so remote that they have little influence in inducing the workman to give up part of his present real enjoyments for the sake of faraway and uncertain improvements. Even though the future advantages to be attained through organization may be clearly perceived by the workman, there may be little willingness on his part to undergo present sacrifice through the payment of dues if he himself will reap no personal gain from these advantages when they are obtained. This would be true if his employment in the occupation were for only a comparatively short time. The work of many unskilled laborers is largely of this temporary kind; for example, the laborers on railroad construction work, on timber cutting, on irrigation ditches, or on the docks are many of them the so-called floating laborers who drift around from one job to

another, never remaining long at any one. The president of the Longshoremen stated that on the Atlantic Coast and the Gulf the coast-steamer longshoremen were mostly floating laborers and were difficult to organize.[12] The secretary of the Seamen's Union stated that the same thing was true of deck hands on steamers.[13] The number of these floating laborers has been estimated all the way from two to five millions.[14] Many of the recent immigrants belong to this class. They are unmarried or have left their wives and families abroad, and they have no property or other restraining influence to attach them to a community.[15] Although no accurate estimate can be given, it is certain that the number in this shifting, mobile working class is large. No statistics are available in regard to the permanency of the work of the various classes of male laborers. It is certain, however, that among most of the lower grades of workmen employment in one particular occupation is far less permanent than among the highly skilled.

Of the great majority of women in industry it is certainly true that they look upon their work as only a temporary occupation. "Young women of the working classes almost universally look upon their future marriage as probable, and few of them expect, in the event of marriage, to continue as wage-earners. It is true that among certain classes and races of immigrants, and also among textile workers generally, there are many women who expect to work at a trade after marriage; but these are exceptional cases. It is also true that some considerable proportion of the women in trade unions are married; but these facts do not affect the general situation."[16] The secretary of a local union of

[12] Interview with T. P. O'Connor, Buffalo, September 10, 1914.

[13] Interview with Thomas A. Hanson, Chicago, September 4, 1914.

[14] These guesses are given in an article on the "Floating Laborer" by Will Irwin in the Saturday Evening Post, May 9, 1914, p. 50. Mr. Irwin's article was based upon material collected by Peter Alexander Speek for the United States Commission on Industrial Relations.

[15] Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission, vol. i, S. Doc. No. 747, 61st Cong., 3d Sess., pp. 499–500.

[16] Andrews and Bliss, p. 140.

garment workers in Buffalo stated that the great majority of girls in her union did not stay at the trade over one year.[17] Doubtless this estimate is too high for the industry as a whole, but it indicates the tendency. It is stated by telephone officials that the average period of employment for telephone operators is about three years.

The inferior capacity of the less intelligent workman to visualize clearly the future advantages to be obtained from organization, and the unwillingness to make present sacrifice for the sake of future gain, which is due to the temporary character of the employment of many unskilled laborers, and especially of women in industry, may be set down as partly accounting for the fact that although these workers will join the union when an immediate objective is in view, they have on the whole been signally unsuccessful in establishing strong permanent organizations.

It is frequently urged by trade-union leaders that this difficulty of maintaining permanent unions must be overcome by educating the laborers as to the necessity for such organizations. Doubtless much may be done by education, but several obstacles hamper considerably the success of such a policy. The principal channels for the education of the trade unionist are the union meeting and union literature. Many of the unskilled workmen, however, lack interest enough to take advantage of these channels. For example, in 1909 Vice-President Lewis of the United Mine Workers reported that it was a well-known fact that, except in a crisis, a majority of the members took little interest in the organization and seldom attended meetings.[18] Such complaints are common among trade-union leaders. Likewise, when a subscription price is charged for the union journal, complaint is sometimes made of the lack of interest of the members who fail to subscribe.[19] Much more would undoubtedly be accomplished if the journal were

[17] Proceedings, United Garment Workers, 1906, p. 69.
[18] Proceedings, 1909, p. 68.
[19] See, for example, report of secretary in Proceedings, United Mine Workers, 1914, p. 210.

given gratis to each member, as is done in many unions. But in the great industries like mining, textile work, steel work, slaughtering, and meat packing, where a great number of the unskilled workers are of mixed races, speaking numerous languages, it would be an extremely expensive matter to supply all the workers steadily with literature in their own language.

Again, in those industries employing a great number of workers whose occupation is only temporary, the policy of education would lose a large part of its value, for probably as soon as the worker had been imbued with the proper union spirit he would be about ready to sever his connection with the industry. Where the worker simply passes over into some other industry, this education would not be wasted. But where there is a constant entrance into the industrial ranks of large classes of laborers whose stay is only temporary and who then withdraw, to be replaced by another relay of workers, the difficulties in the way of education are greatly enhanced. This is true in the case of women, most of whom, as we have seen, are only temporarily employed in industry. It is also true of a large section of the immigrant workers. Since July 1, 1907, the Immigration Bureau has kept a detailed record of the emigration or outward flow of aliens as well as of the immigration or inward flow. These records show that for the three fiscal years 1908, 1909, and 1910 the number of aliens coming in was 2,576,226, the number going out, 823,311; in other words, 32 returning for every 100 admitted.[20] This ebb and flow of workers was greatest among the common laborers. Thus 535,151[21] laborers are reported as having entered and 487,998[22] as having departed during the three years, or 91 returning for every 100 admitted. For the two years 1908 and 1909, however, the number entering this country was smaller than usual on account of the depression following

[20] Report of the Immigration Commission, "Statistical Review of Immigration 1820–1910," p. 383.
[21] Ibid., p. 178.
[22] Ibid., p. 377.

the panic of 1907. For the same reason it is probable that the number departing was greater than usual. But it is known that for a considerable period of years the emigration movement has been approximately one third as great as the immigration movement,[23] so that, at all events, a large proportion of the immigrant laborers in this country are only temporarily connected with our industrial life. More than 81 per cent of the total number leaving the country during the three years 1908, 1909 and 1910, and reporting length of residence, had been here not over five years.[24]

(2) It is desirable that the members of the union be able to conduct its affairs with honesty, foresight, and conservatism. The absence of these qualities, as we have seen, has frequently resulted in the break-up of local unions. In the possession of these qualities we should naturally expect workmen of the lower grades to be more lacking than highly skilled artisans; and such expectations are borne out by experience. It is, of course, probable that every union has at times suffered from dishonesty or bad management, but the most frequent instances of these evils are to be found among the unskilled workmen. The prevalence of dishonesty among the Hod Carriers and Building Laborers and among the Hotel and Restaurant Employees has already been pointed out. The members of the former union are certainly unskilled workmen; and the members of the latter, mostly bartenders, can hardly be classed as highly skilled. In the Brotherhood of Teamsters we find from the reports of the traveling auditor that in the unions examined by him, which in no year constituted over half of the total number of local unions, there was for the seven years from 1906 to 1912 an average per year of ten local secretaries who were short in their accounts. The secretary of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen—a union which before the disastrous strike of 1904 was made up principally of unskilled workmen—reported that after

[23] Report of the Immigration Commission, "Statistical Review of Immigration 1820–1910," p. 372.

[24] Ibid., p. 374.

that strike, defalcations followed rapidly one after another until the union was notified by the bonding company that in the future no more bonds would be issued except at double the previous rates. He stated that something over one hundred treasurers defaulted, twenty-seven of them inside of sixty days.[25] In 1900 the secretary of the Tobacco Workers, a union likewise made up of unskilled workers, reported: "I am sorry to say it, but there are very few of our local unions that have escaped the hand of some rascally financial officer or has [have] not met with losses by placing in office some one who is no more fit to have charge of the financial affairs of a union than he would to be president of a national bank. This is often done by a ring or clique, who have friendship in view, in place of the competency of the candidate for office."[26]

It is in the nature of things a difficult matter to make comparisons between different unions in regard to so intangible a thing as the degree of managerial ability displayed. A priori, we should say that on the whole among unskilled workers, who have less education and training and are less accustomed to thinking for themselves, this ability is inferior to that shown by skilled mechanics. Attention has already been called to the fact that the secretaries of the Car Workers and of the Brick, Tile and Terra Cotta Workers complained that their chief hindrance in effecting firm organizations among unskilled foreigners was their difficulty in obtaining competent leadership. This was likewise said to be the case to some extent among the Textile Workers. The Teamsters also have suffered much in the past from poor management. An editorial in "The Teamster" in 1910 asserts that a large local union in San Francisco had withdrawn from the international union five years before because of "the flagrant violations of the laws, with dishonest intentions on the part of the International organization, which at that time was dominated by the unworthy C. P. Shea, who was acting as General President, and in con-

[25] Proceedings, 1906, p. 25.
[26] Proceedings, 1900, in The Tobacco Worker, October, 1900, p. 19.

sequence of said misgovernment the teamsters of the country became sadly demoralized and disunited."[27] Representatives of independent hod carriers' unions at a conference in 1910 demanded that the administration of the international union be changed as a condition of their affiliation, claiming that it was deceitful and incompetent and that it catered to one element.[28]

Something may be done in the way of overcoming this dearth of managerial ability by the employment of outside officials. Sidney and Beatrice Webb cite several cases of this in English trade-union experience. "For instance, Henry Taylor, the coadjutor of Mr. Joseph Arch in organizing the agricultural laborers in 1872, was a carpenter; Mr. Tom Mann, for two years salaried President of the Dock, Wharf, and Riverside Laborers, is a member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers; whilst Mr. McHugh, for some time General Secretary of the National Union of Dock Laborers, is a compositor."[29] An instance of the employment of an outside official by a union in this country is found in the case of the Hod Carriers. On February 17, 1909, the secretary of this union, having been found short in his accounts, resigned from office. There was no one in the union, President D'Alessandro reported, immediately available for carrying on the duties of the office. He therefore appealed to Mr. Gompers, as president of the American Federation of Labor, for assistance. Mr. Gompers allowed the union the services of General Organizer Jacob Tazelaar of the Federation from February 17 to May 1, free of charge. After that Mr. Tazelaar was continued in office on full salary till June 19.[30] Employment by unions of men outside of the craft as regular officials is, however, a very unusual occurrence in this country, although it should be noted that much outside managerial assistance may be sup-

[27] The Teamsters, June, 1910, p. 7.
[28] Proceedings, Building Trades Department, 1910, pp. 30–32, Report of President Kirby.
[29] The History of Trade Unionism (new ed., 1911), p. 462, note.
[30] Proceedings, Hod Carriers, 1909, in Official Journal, October, 1909, p. 187.

plied to local unions of unskilled laborers through the organizers of the American Federation of Labor. These organizers are engaged not only in starting new local unions, but in building up these unions, in conducting negotiations with employers, or in assisting in any other way in which they can be of use. The president of the Hod Carriers speaks thus of the work of these officers: "These faithful workers have been the means of organizing for and affiliating with us many Local Unions, and have also reinstated Locals that had grown careless in the payment of their dues to the International Union, and were drifting along independent of any National or International organization.

"These men have assisted us in other ways. Many of them have been the means of establishing peace and harmony between the employers and the employees; they have assisted in making agreements satisfactory to contractor and laborer; they have given courage and strength to many a member of our organization who had become disheartened; they have inspired the half-hearted union man with the true spirit of unionism."[31] The organizers of the American Federation of Labor perform similar services for many unions, among which are unions of unskilled workmen, including the numerous federal labor unions and local unions directly affiliated with the Federation.

A deficiency in managerial ability on the part of unskilled workmen may also be overcome in case these workmen are organized in the same union with the skilled workers in the industry. This is true in industrial unions, which include both skilled and unskilled workmen. In a union like the United Mine Workers, where all of the employees in and about a coal mine are organized into one local union, the unskilled workmen share in the benefit derived from whatever superior intelligence and ability in conducting the affairs of the organization the skilled workmen may possess.

(3) It is desirable that there be willingness and ability on

[31] Proceedings, 1909, p. 187.

the part of members to contribute adequate dues to the support of the union. In this way, as has been shown, it becomes possible for the union to build up a strong reserve fund, to maintain better discipline and unity, and to supply a system of benefits, gaining thereby all the advantages that accrue from these things. Furthermore, local unions of unskilled workmen, where managerial capacity is smallest, are the very ones which should have the greatest amount of supervision, control, and instruction from the officers of the national union, whom, on the whole, we may expect to be of greater ability than the ordinary local official. In spite of their greater need, however, unions of unskilled workers are the very ones that are least capable of supplying these wants. This is due to the fact that such workers are, on the whole, the most poorly paid class of laborers, and consequently are less able and less inclined to contribute any large sum for the support of their unions. Even their entire wage may place their income very close to the so-called subsistence minimum. Can we wonder, for example, that a group of textile workers in the cotton mills of New England, where the median weekly wage for women is between $6 and $6.99 and for men between $7 and $7.99,[32] are little inclined to contribute any large portion of it as trade-union dues? Insufficiently supplied with funds, the union of the lower grades of workmen is handicapped in doing those things the performance of which might add greatly to its strength and stability.

If the reader will call to mind the four unions which were considered in connection with the study of the weakness in national unions resulting from inadequate financial resources —the Hod Carriers, the Longshoremen, the Teamsters, and the Textile Workers—it will be noticed that in each case the union is composed entirely, or in large part, of unskilled or slightly skilled workmen. The per capita tax to the national union, it will be remembered, was fifteen cents per

[32] "Report on Women and Child Wage-Earners in the United States," vol. i, in S. Doc. No. 645, 61st Cong., 2d Sess., p. 305. The figures are for a representative week.

month in the case of the first three unions and twenty cents per month in the case of the last. The unions have experienced great difficulty in raising the tax even to these amounts. In 1911 an attempt was made at the convention of the Longshoremen to lower the tax to ten cents; it failed by a vote of only 75 to 54½.[33] The Teamsters had their first great split in 1901 largely because of the raising of the per capita tax from five to twenty-five cents.[34] When an amalgamation took place, the rate was lowered to fifteen cents. Officers of the Hod Carriers have from time to time complained that the cause of their failure to secure the affiliation of certain independent unions was the "cheap dues" of these bodies and their unwillingness to pay the necessary per capita tax to the international union.[35] In 1904 the president of the Textile Workers reported that, while a few of the local unions, notably the Mulespinners and the Loom-fixers, had learned by experience the necessity of paying high dues in order to build up a union worthy of the name, others had gone along for years paying such low dues that they did not then and never would amount to anything.[36] In 1902 he reported that some local unions were paying dues of not more than ten cents per month.[37]

Just as the unskilled workman is little disposed to stick permanently to the union because he is concerned mostly about immediate gains and comparatively little about the future, so for the same reason it is difficult to make him see the necessity of building large reserve funds, which are a form of provision for the future. Similarly, insurance, which is likewise a form of saving, is not likely to prove attractive to him. At any rate, because of his small income, he is less capable than is the skilled workman of paying adequate dues for any substantial insurance. Of the

[33] Proceedings, 1911, pp. 135, 140–142.
[34] Team Drivers' Journal, March, 1902, p. 3.
[35] See reports of general president in Official Journal, November, 1906, p. 6, April, 1907, p. 5.
[36] Proceedings, 1904, p. 3. The mulespinners and the loom-fixers are among the more skilled of the textile workers.
[37] Proceedings, 1902, p. 9. At this time (1902) the per capita tax to the national union was only five cents per quarter.

four unions of unskilled workmen which we have been considering, two, the Teamsters and the Longshoremen, have no national benefit features at all; and in the other two, the Hod Carriers and the Textile Workers, the benefits provided are extremely small. According to the report in the proceedings of the American Federation of Labor for the year 1914, the total benefits paid during the year by the former amounted to $5100 and by the latter to $2600, or about twenty and fifteen cents per member respectively. This may be compared with an expenditure per member of about $13.80 by the Cigar Makers and $5.60 by the Molders.[38]

We cannot judge with absolute certainty from the statistics of trade unions of the comparative attractiveness of benefits to skilled and unskilled workmen. The majority of American trade unions provide some sort of benefits; but with the exception of the railroad brotherhoods and a few unions like the Cigarmakers, the Molders, the Street Railway Employees, and recently the Typographical Union, the amounts paid are for the most part small. A number of unions of skilled workers provide no national benefits, so that we cannot prove statistically that it is the unskilled character of the workmen which prevents the establishment of benefit systems. On the other hand, at least one union of comparatively unskilled workers, the Hotel and Restaurant Employees, has fairly large national benefits, as benefits run among American trade unions. According to the 1914 report of the American Federation of Labor, they amounted to an annual expenditure of about $2.40 per member. It is safe to say, however, that on the whole the largest expenditures for national benefits are made by unions of skilled workers, while the unions of unskilled workers pay either very small benefits or none at all.

The willingness to pay large dues in order to supply the union with adequate resources and to provide for benefits is also largely affected by the temporary character of the worker's employment. The individual, expecting to be out

[38] Proceedings, 1914, p. 29.

of the occupation soon, is not particularly interested in building up a large reserve fund for use several years hence, when he will probably no longer be engaged in that kind of work. It is doubtless this temporary character of the employment of a great number of workers in the garment industry that is largely responsible for their unwillingness to pay high dues. In 1906 the president of the United Garment Workers complained that all referendums submitted in the past which meant no expense to the membership were always carried, while those for an increased per capita tax for such things as label agitation and organization were always voted down.[39] At the convention of the union in 1910 a special committee recommended that, as a nucleus for the formation of a strike fund, a quarterly assessment of twenty-five cents should be levied on each member, the amount so collected to accumulate for a period of two years. This was concurred in by the convention and later submitted to a referendum vote. It was defeated, however, by a vote of 5700 to 3606.[40] In 1906, when an effort was being made by the national union to increase dues, the secretary of a large local union in Buffalo declared that on account of the transient and consequently uneducated (as regarded unionism) quality of the female membership it would be impossible to increase dues in that union. "But," it was stated, "if you wish higher per capita, regardless of whether we disrupt the Local or not, we will at least try to collect it."[41]

It is also probable that where employment in the occupation is only temporary, benefits will be less attractive than where it is permanent. Old-age pensions, it is obvious, could offer no inducement at all. Sick, death, and unemployment benefits might be provided. But if they were offered with the usual requirement that a continuous membership of six months more or less was necessary before the

[39] Proceedings, 1906, p. 21.
[40] Proceedings, 1912, p. 11, Report of President.
[41] Proceedings, 1906, p. 69, Report of Secretary of Local Union No. 231.

rights to them accrued, it is clear that their attractiveness to those employed in the occupation for only a year or two would be much diminished. On the other hand, if this requirement were omitted, it is equally clear that the benefits would lose much of their power to bind members steadily to the union, since no accumulated advantages would be lost through suspension. The committee on organization of the National Women's Trade Union League reported in 1913 that the past attempts in Chicago and New York to reach Italian girls through benefit associations and other social attractions had not been a success as an inducement to join the organization, and it urged that in the future these girls be appealed to on trade-union lines.[42]

(4) It is desirable that there should be social congeniality among the workers who are to be united in the same organization. In the United States there are two important factors which in some cases prevent this accord. These are the mixture of various white races, and the presence of whites and negroes in the same occupations in the South. Frequently the complaint is made by trade-union officials that racial prejudices form a great hindrance to organization. For instance, in 1901 the general organizer of the Barbers reported the following state of affairs in Hoboken, New Jersey: "The trouble is that our craft is about equally divided between Germans and Italians. The Italians are willing to organize with Germans, but the Germans would have nothing to do with the organization if the Italians could get in."[43] Dr. Roberts, speaking of the mixture of races in the anthracite coal fields, says: "This racial pride, equally strong in each race, is the cause of many conflicts between these men when they meet over their cups. . . . It has its influence upon the industry. The Pole and Lithuanian will not work together. Foremen have to study national proclivities and prejudices with regard to the productive efficiency of groups of employees under their management. In large towns, where the mine employees live,

[42] Proceedings, 1913, p. 24.
[43] Barbers' Journal, July, 1901, p. 146.

the various races form colonies and generally keep within the limits of the section appropriated by them."[44] In 1901 President Mitchell of the United Mine Workers declared that the companies took advantage of circumstances such as these, and "used every possible influence to arouse religious and racial prejudices and to prevent the men from uniting in a common cause against a system which was depriving them of their manhood and causing an abandonment of hope in their hearts."[45] It is charged by Mr. Gompers that the United States Steel Corporation has deliberately pursued the policy of employing workmen speaking various foreign tongues in order to thwart attempts at organization, and he asserts that "with languages not easily understood and various tongues spoken in a single steel plant, it is not to be wondered that the workers' comprehension of rights to which they are entitled comes as an exceedingly slow process."[46]

A decided obstacle to organization in the South has been the presence of the great number of negro laborers working in the same occupations as the whites, and the racial prejudice existing in that section. In a few unions the national rules forbid the admission of negroes.[47] Most of these, however, with the exception of the Maintenance-of-Way Employees, are unions in occupations where the number of negroes is probably very small, so that this exclusion cannot be considered as responsible in any large measure for the difficulties in organization. The trouble is that, although most of the national unions have nothing in their constitutions to prohibit the admission of negroes, local prejudice

[44] P. Roberts, The Anthracite Coal Communities, pp. 24–25.

[45] Proceedings, 1901, p. 33.

[46] Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, 1912, p. 28.

[47] Mr. Booker T. Washington in an article in the Atlantic Monthly, June, 1913, p. 756, on "The Negro and the Labor Unions," mentions nine such unions: International Brotherhood of Maintenance-of-Way Employees; Switchmen's Union; Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen; Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen; Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers; Order of Railway Conductors; Order of Railway Telegraphers; American Wire Weavers' Protective Association; and the International Brotherhood of Boiler Makers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers of America.

against them has been a severe handicap to the growth of the unions.

The most usual form of local discrimination is the refusal on the part of the whites to belong to the same union with the negroes. This causes especial difficulty in organizing small towns, since there may be here an insufficient number of either whites or negroes to form separate unions. Organizers of the Barbers[48] and of the Sheet Metal Workers[49] have complained of this difficulty, and undoubtedly the same trouble has been experienced by other unions. Sometimes a negro will be admitted to a local union in one town, and then, upon removal to another place, will be rejected. An organizer of the Bricklayers reported in 1905 that this state of affairs existed in Richmond, Norfolk, and Newport, Virginia, and he asserted that it was being used as an effective argument against the union by bricklayers all over North Carolina.[50] In 1903 a resolution introduced at the convention of the United Mine Workers declared that certain local unions in Kansas were refusing to receive transfer cards on account of color, thereby causing demoralization in the work of organizing.[51] Similar experiences have occurred among the Painters and the Carpenters.[52] Even in places where there are enough whites and negroes to form separate local unions, the organization of the latter has sometimes been prevented through the refusal of an established union of whites to give its consent to the chartering of a separate union of negroes. Dr. Wolfe mentions instances of this among the Bricklayers and other unions.[53] Racial prejudice prevents the local union from admitting negroes to its own ranks; and the desire to maintain complete jurisdiction over the local territory causes it to oppose the chartering of another union at the same place.

[48] Journeyman Barber, August, 1910, p. 203.
[49] Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers' Journal, January, 1905, p. 8.
[50] Bricklayers, Fortieth Annual Report of President, for term ending December 1, 1905, p. 158.
[51] Proceedings, 1903, pp. 515–516.
[52] F. E. Wolfe, "Admission to American Trade Unions," in Johns Hopkins University Studies, ser. xxx, no. 3, p. 129.
[53] Ibid., pp. 127–128.

Strong complaints and vigorous protests are heard from trade-union leaders concerning this racial prejudice and its disorganizing effects. In 1906, for instance, James Kirby, at that time president of the Structural Building Trades Alliance, asserted: "I might say that in the South where we have most difficulties it is brought about by the race question. The white man of the South does not feel able to associate with the colored man unless he wants the colored man to assist him."[54] In 1904 the president of the Maintenance of Way Employees declared: "They [the workmen] do not object to their industrial masters fixing the same rate of pay and the same standard of living for white men and negroes, even if the rates of pay are so low that it compels them to bring their children up in ignorance, but they are opposed to acting in concert with the negro in such a way as to promote their mutual interests."[55] Such complaints can be heard from the officials of many unions that have a considerable negro element to deal with.

To recapitulate the problem of organizing unskilled workers, it may be said that, generally speaking, they stand in an inferior strategic position in carrying on any lengthy struggle with an employer, and that, although they may by striking gain concessions from employers, the formation of stable and permanent organizations among them is impeded by (1) their greater tendency to consider only immediate gains, (2) the poorer quality of managerial ability among them, and (3) their inability and unwillingness to contribute high dues. These factors, in turn, may be said to be due to (a) the lower intelligence of unskilled workers, (b) the often temporary character of their employment in particular occupations, and (c) their lower wages.

In the case of women in industry, as far as they may be classed as unskilled workers the same analysis applies. With them, however, the over-shadowing difficulty lies in the temporary character of their employment.

[54] Proceedings, Hod Carriers and Building Laborers' International Union, 1906, p. 2, address by James Kirby.

[55] Proceedings, 1904, in The Advance Advocate, December, 1904, p. 910.

In the case of negroes also, as far as they are unskilled workers, the same analysis holds. Here in addition is found the difficulty caused by racial prejudice. The question also arises whether the negro as such is any more difficult to organize than the white man. The opinions of trade-union leaders differ upon this matter. Some assert that the negroes make good union men and others say just the contrary. Mr. Booker T. Washington states that, in answer to his query to a number of trade unions as to whether negroes on the whole make good union men, he received out of a total of fifty-one only two replies in the negative.[56] He himself, however, thought that the negro was not naturally inclined toward trade unionism. He says:

> Another thing which is to some extent peculiar about the Negro in the Southern states, is that the average Negro is more accustomed to work for persons than for wages. When he gets a job, therefore, he is inclined to consider the source from which it comes. The Negro is himself a friendly sort of person, and it makes a great deal of difference to him whether he believes the man he is working for is his friend or his enemy. One reason for this is that he has found in the past that the friendship and confidence of a good white man, who stands well in the community, are a valuable asset in time of trouble. For this reason he does not always understand, and does not like, an organization which seems to be founded on a sort of impersonal enmity to the man by whom he is employed.[57]

We have no statistics of trade-union membership as a whole in the various States from which we might judge the effect upon organization of the large number of negro artisans in the South. A consideration of the statistics of membership in trade unions among the bricklayers, masons, and plasterers, however, gives evidence of the fact that the presence of the negro has been a deterrent element in the growth of trade unionism. In Table III a comparison is made of the extent of organization in ten States where the negro bricklayers and masons form twenty-five per cent or over of the total number of such workmen with the extent of organization in ten other States where the negro is an unimportant factor. In order to eliminate the influence of

[56] Washington, p. 756.
[57] Ibid., pp. 756–757.

the concentration of population in cities, each State was compared with another State where the percentage of bricklayers, masons, and plasterers in towns of 25,000 or over was approximately the same.

TABLE III

COMPARISON FOR SELECTED STATES OF EXTENT OF ORGANIZATION IN 1910 FOR BRICKLAYERS, MASONS, AND PLASTERERS, ACCORDING TO PERCENTAGE OF NEGRO BRICKLAYERS[58]

| States where negroes form 25 per cent. or over of total number of bricklayers and masons | | | | States where percentage of urban population is the same but negroes are an unimportant factor | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| States | Percentage of negro bricklayers and masons to total | Percentage in union | Percentage in towns of 25,000 or over | Percentage in towns of 25,000 or over | Percentage in union | Percentage of negro bricklayersand masons to total | States |
| Florida..... | 56 | 38 | 35 | 31 | 19 | 1 | Nebraska |
| Georgia..... | 70 | 17 | 39 | 41 | 47 | 11 | Texas |
| Arkansas.... | 29 | 30 | 19 | 21 | 17 | 7 | Kansas |
| Louisiana.... | 62 | 19 | 67 | 64 | 46 | 2 | California |
| Mississippi.. | 65 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | South Dakota |
| North Carolina... | 57 | 3 | 10 | 12 | 25 | 5 | West Virginia |
| South Carolina... | 81 | 10 | 18 | 15 | 40 | 0.4 | Maine |
| Tennessee... | 50 | 20 | 44 | 44 | 29 | 2 | Michigan |
| Virginia..... | 25 | 13 | 30 | 29 | 25 | 0.3 | Wisconsin |
| Alabama.... | 57 | 23 | 47 | 48 | 35 | 5 | Maryland |

By comparing columns 2 and 5 it will be seen that in seven out of ten of the pairs of States the extent of organization in the negro States was considerably below that in the non-negro States.

In order to compare with one another the total extent of

[58] The figures for the total number of bricklayers, masons, and plasterers in cities of 25,000 or over, and for the proportion of negro bricklayers and masons to the total of such workmen, were calculated from the statistics given in the Thirteenth Census, 1910, vol. iv, Occupation Statistics, pp. 96–151, 152–291, 434–534. The figures for the number of bricklayers, masons, and plasterers in unions were calculated from statistics in the Forty-fifth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' International Union for the term ending December 1, 1910, pp. 272–293, and in The Plasterer, July, 1910, pp. 17, 18.

organization in each of these groups of States, there is set forth in Table IV for each State the total number of bricklayers, masons, and plasterers, the number in unions, and the number in towns of 25,000 or over.

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF THE SAME STATES BY ABSOLUTE NUMBER OF BRICKLAYERS, MASONS, AND PLASTERERS IN THE STATE, IN UNIONS, AND IN TOWNS OF 25,000 OR OVER IN 1910

| States where negroes form 25 per cent or over of total number of bricklayers and masons | | | | States where percentage of urban population is the same but negroes are unimportant factor | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| States | Total in state | In unions | In towns of 25,000 or over | In towns of 25,000 or over | In unions | Total in state | States |
| Florida..... | 1111 | 421 | 387 | 864 | 520 | 2787 | Nebraska |
| Georgia..... | 3349 | 566 | 1308 | 1392 | 1605 | 3396 | Texas |
| Arkansas.... | 1089 | 330 | 202 | 965 | 803 | 4631 | Kansas |
| Louisiana.... | 1939 | 358 | 1294 | 3576 | 2543 | 5575 | California |
| Mississippi.. | 917 | 113 | 0 | 0 | 80 | 1090 | South Dakota |
| North Carolina... | 2328 | 70 | 235 | 252 | 518 | 2067 | West Virginia |
| South Carolina... | 1727 | 164 | 313 | 259 | 684 | 1696 | Maine |
| Tennessee... | 2967 | 581 | 1314 | 3057 | 1977 | 6880 | Michigan |
| Virginia..... | 3614 | 472 | 1094 | 1849 | 1554 | 6314 | Wisconsin |
| Alabama.... | 2123 | 483 | 991 | 1505 | 1075 | 3110 | Maryland |
| Total..... | 21164 | 3558 | 7138 | 13719 | 11359 | 37546 | Total |

Calculating for each of these groups the percentages in towns and in unions, it will be seen that in the negro group, with 34 per cent in towns, only 17 per cent were organized; while in the non-negro group, with an approximately equal proportion in towns, that is, 37 per cent, 30 per cent were organized.

How far this comparative weakness in organization in the negro States is due to the poor qualities which the negro possesses for organization and how far to the difficulties growing out of racial prejudice it is impossible to determine. From one or the other or both causes, however, it is apparent that the presence of the negro artisan has hindered the growth of organization. It is probable that, as the

white artisans of the South realize the disadvantages which they suffer because of the presence of a large unorganized negro element, racial prejudice will yield more and more to the demands of their economic interests, and increased efforts will be made to bring about the organization of the negro. In 1903 the Bricklayers and Masons took a long step forward by providing that, when a subordinate union refused to consent to the granting of a charter to a new local union simply on account of race, nationality, or religion, the executive board should have discretionary power to grant the charter.[59] In 1905 two special organizers were employed by this union in the South; the organizing work done by them cost $2250, and twenty-two unions were formed.[60] In 1906 the cost of organizing in the South was about $1200.[61] In 1907 $4000 was spent; there were two organizers, one white and one colored, and they succeeded in organizing twenty-six new unions in addition to their work of building up old unions.[62] These amounts are not large compared with the amounts spent by some other unions for organizing work, but they are considerably larger than the sums spent by the Bricklayers and Masons for such work in the past. In 1914 Secretary Dobson stated that there were some cities where the whites still refused to allow negroes to come into the same union or work on the same job with them, but said that these difficulties were gradually being overcome.[63]

Students of labor problems and trade-union leaders agree that unskilled and female laborers have presented an especially difficult problem in the way of organization. Likewise, although there may be differences of opinion in regard to the union qualities of the negro, it would probably not be questioned that organizing in the South has been more

[59] Wolfe, p. 127.
[60] Fortieth Annual Report of Secretary, December 1, 1905, p. 354.
[61] Forty-first Annual Report of Secretary, December 1, 1906, p. 319.
[62] Forty-second Annual Report of Secretary, December 1, 1907, pp. 440–441.
[63] Interview with William Dobson, secretary, Indianapolis, August 29, 1914.

difficult because of his presence. As to the effect of the recent large immigration, however, we find a wide divergence of views. Frequently trade-union leaders seek to explain their failure to effect organization in certain industries by the presence in them of the large number of recent immigrants. This, for instance, has been put forward as the reason for the lack of organization in the iron and steel industry and the textile industry. On the other hand, the secretaries of a number of unions with whom the writer had interviews declared that they experienced no especial difficulty in organizing foreigners. The latter opinions, however, are considerably in the minority, and were expressed principally by officers of unions in skilled trades.

The United States Immigration Commission, after an extended study of the problem of immigration in many of its aspects, came to the conclusion that

> the extensive employment of southern and eastern European immigrants in manufacturing and mining has in many places resulted in the weakening of labor organizations or in their complete disruption. . . . The tendency of recent immigrants to thrift and their desire for immediate gains have made them reluctant to enter into labor disputes involving loss of time, or to join labor organizations to which it was necessary to pay regular dues. As a consequence, the recent immigrant has not, as a rule, affiliated himself with labor unions unless compelled to do so as a preliminary step toward acquiring work, and after becoming a member of a labor union he has manifested but little interest in the tenets or policy of the organization.[64]

This conclusion of the commission is attacked by Dr. Hourwich, who claims that it is not warranted by statistics,[65] and who seems inclined toward the belief that the recent immigration from southern and eastern Europe has actually encouraged organization. He cites numerous statistics in support of his own contentions. Thus he shows that in the years from 1901 to 1910, the period of the largest immigration from southern and eastern Europe, organization pro-

[64] Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission, vol. i, pp. 530–531.

[65] I. A. Hourwich, Immigration and Labor, p. 325.

gressed rapidly in this country, membership in unions increasing from about 1,300,000 at the former date to about 2,625,000 at the latter; in other words, doubling.[66] He shows that in Kansas, where the immigrant population is insignificant, the ratio by per cent of trade-union membership to urban population[67] was smaller from 1900 to 1909 than in New York, where recent immigrants form a large part of the population.[68] He shows that in New York City in 1900 one half of all the breadwinners in non-agricultural pursuits were foreign-born, whereas in the remainder of the State three fourths were of native birth; but at the same time New York City had more than its proportionate share of trade-union membership.[69] In considering particular industries, he points to the success achieved in forming organizations among the coal miners[70] and the garment workers,[71] where the influx of recent immigrants has been especially large; and shows that in the cotton[72] and woollen mills and in the iron and steel industry there never has been any significant organization among the unskilled workers, even before the large influx of the southern and eastern European immigrants into those industries.[73] He also cites statistics and instances to show the willingness of these immigrants to engage in strikes.

It is easy, however, to draw unjustifiable inferences from some of these statistics. For instance, the fact that the great increase in organization has occurred during the period of arrival of the immigrants from southern and eastern Europe does not prove that the latter were in any way responsible for the increase. It must be remembered that for a large part of the period before this, unions were just getting established and were struggling for a standing in

[66] Hourwich, pp. 334–335.
[67] Urban population is defined as that residing in cities and other incorporated places of 2500 inhabitants or more.
[68] Hourwich, p. 339.
[69] Ibid., pp. 341–342.
[70] Ibid., pp. 446–447.
[71] Ibid., p. 326.
[72] Ibid., p. 381.
[73] Ibid., pp. 392–393.

the community. With the strength and experience thus secured it became possible in later years to carry on trade-union agitation with greater vigor. Trade unionism had passed out of the experimental stage into an established position in our industrial life.

Nor should we place too much reliance upon the showing of the figures as to the extent of membership of trade unions in Kansas and New York. Kansas is principally an agricultural State, and although, as Dr. Hourwich has shown, manufactures may have been increasing there very rapidly in recent years, there has not been the long sustained effort to bring about organization that there has been in the old manufacturing State of New York. Dr. Hourwich's figures show, moreover, that in recent years Kansas has been catching up to New York in its percentage of organized workers in the urban population. While in 1900 the percentages stood New York 4.6 and Kansas 1.9, in 1909 they stood New York 5.3 and Kansas 4.4. Finally, as will be discussed later, it is generally the case that unions have been less successful in organizing in small towns than in large cities. It is true that Dr. Hourwich's comparison is based upon urban population only. But this includes towns with a population as low as 2500, and in such places it may happen in many trades that there are either too few workmen for a local union to be formed, or at least not enough to make it worth while for the national union to devote great efforts to organizing. In Kansas the percentage of industrial population in large cities is far smaller than in New York, and the difficulties in organizing are correspondingly increased. In 1910 the proportion of bricklayers, masons, and plasterers in towns of 25,000 or more was in New York 78 per cent and in Kansas only 21 per cent. In conformity with this, 46 per cent of these workers were organized in New York and only 17 per cent in Kansas. A similar condition exists among the painters and paperhangers. Here the percentages of workers in cities of 25,000 or more are respectively 76 and 23 for New York and Kansas, and the

percentages organized are 23 and 6.[74] For these reasons New York and Kansas are not properly comparable States for Dr. Hourwich's purpose, and, therefore, the statistics given prove nothing as to the comparative difficulty in organizing native Americans and recent immigrants.

Likewise nothing as to the comparative organizability of native Americans or recent immigrants is proved by the fact that New York City as compared with the rest of the State had more than its proportionate share of trade-union membership, although one half of all breadwinners in non-agricultural pursuits in the city were foreign-born and in the remainder of the State three fourths were of native birth. Here again no account is taken of the fact that outside of New York City many of the breadwinners in non-agricultural pursuits are located in small towns or villages or even rural districts, where, as we have shown, they can be less easily organized.

Although we can through the use of statistics come to no definite conclusion as to whether recent immigration has proved a detriment or an encouragement to organization, we can, however, say that the statement of the Immigration Commission that "the tendency of recent immigrants to thrift and their desire for immediate gains have made them reluctant to enter into labor disputes involving loss of time" is not altogether in consonance with the experience of trade unions having to deal with large bodies of these immigrants. In Chapter I it was shown that among the coal mine workers, among the garment workers, and among the textile workers in the North, where recent immigrants form a very large proportion of the laboring force, there have frequently been strikes where thousands of the workers have gone out. It is true that among the garment workers

[74] These percentages were calculated from the statistics given in the Thirteenth Census, 1910, vol. iv, Occupations, and from the reports of union membership given in the following: Forty-fifth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Bricklayers, Masons, and Plasterers' International Union, for term ending December 1, 1910, pp. 272–293; The Plasterer, July, 1910, pp. 17–18; Reports of General Officers, Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers, September, 1913, p. 98.

strikes have usually been short, but, on the other hand, the average duration of strikes among the coal miners has been very long. In these cases the immigrants seem to have shown no disinclination to enter into labor disputes. As a matter of fact, most of the trade-union leaders who were interviewed by the writer and who complained of the difficulty of organizing immigrants asserted that they had no trouble in getting them to join the union, but that the difficulty was to hold them. President White of the United Mine Workers declared in substance: "To-morrow I could call out all the miners in any district, union or non-union, and they would be anxious to go out. The difficulty consists in holding the men in restraint until the union is ready to make its fight."[75]

Moreover, we find that at least two of these industries in which a large proportion of recent immigrants are employed show a high degree of organization. According to the statistics compiled by Dr. Wolman, 35.3 per cent of the coal mine workers were organized in 1910 and 17.1 per cent of the clothing, shirt, collar, and cuff factory workers. No separate calculation was made for the clothing factories alone, but undoubtedly the percentage of organization in them was considerably larger than the above figure, since there is practically no organization in the collar and cuff industry. Furthermore, since 1910, organization among the mine workers and among the garment workers has made rapid strides, owing, in the one case, to the organization of the anthracite miners and, in the other case, to the growth of the Ladies' Garment Workers' International Union. The membership of the United Mine Workers increased from 231,392 in 1910 to 377,682 in 1913, and that of the Ladies' Garment Workers from 25,999 in 1910 to 114,100 in 1913. Nor can the lack of organization in the iron and steel and in the textile industries be ascribed offhand to the great proportion of immigrant workers in these industries, since, as Dr. Hourwich has shown, the unskilled workers in

[75] Interview with John P. White, Indianapolis, August 29, 1914.

these industries never have been organized, even before the coming of the immigration from southern and eastern Europe.

If immigrants have been especially difficult to organize, a comparison of the extent of organization in one particular industry in different sections of the country, where the proportion of immigrants in the industry varies, should show a lower percentage of organization in districts where the proportion of immigrants is larger. An investigation along this line was made in the coal industry. In Appendix I there is shown in columns 5 and 6 the percentage of foreign-born white operatives and the percentage of organized operatives in the various districts of the United Mine Workers. These percentages were compared by Karl Pearson's method of correlation,[76] and a coefficient of correlation of 0.228 was obtained, with a probable error of 0.154. Inasmuch as 1.00 represents perfect correlation, this comparatively small coefficient of correlation with such a large probable error does not justify us in saying that there exists a causal relationship between the two sets of factors, and that organization is promoted by the presence of a large foreign-born working force. Nevertheless, the fact that we obtained a positive coefficient as high as the above one is at least very strong evidence that organization is not hindered by the presence of the foreign-born workers, since, in that case, the coefficient of correlation would have come out as a negative quantity.

Therefore, while there is not sufficient evidence for holding that the advent of the recent immigrants into our industrial life has actually encouraged organization, neither are we justified in asserting that they are especially tractable in the hands of employers and reluctant to enter into labor disputes. Inasmuch as they are principally unskilled workers, there exist all the difficulties in holding them in the union that were discussed in connection with that class of

[76] For an explanation of this method see W. I. King, Elements of Statistical Method, p. 200; or G. U. Yule, An Introduction to the Theory of Statistics, pp. 157–190.

workers. In their case, too, the mixture of races and racial prejudices probably add to the difficulties of organizers. Then again, the policy of education is especially difficult to carry out with immigrants because of the various languages spoken and the temporary character of the stay of many of them in this country, about one third of them returning to their native lands after a residence here of five years or less. On the other hand, it is possible that these especial impediments to organization may be more than offset by a more revolutionary spirit, and by a greater readiness to respond to the appeals of agitators. Officers of the Garment Workers have stated that they find it much more difficult to get native-born girls to go out on strike than immigrant girls. The readiness of some of these immigrants to strike is also shown by the strikes in their native lands. From 1901 to 1904 there were 3032 industrial strikes in Italy, involving 621,737 workers.[77] In the one year, 1905, estimates Dr. Hourwich from statistics of the Russian government, there were 3,672,000 strikers in the Russian Empire.[78] At times, when a concrete issue presents itself in the way of a strike, the recent immigrants have shown themselves capable of great solidarity in action, as is amply evidenced by the experiences of the mine workers, the textile workers, and the garment workers.

It is because of all these conflicting influences that it is so difficult to come to any positive conclusions as to the effect of immigration upon the growth of trade unionism. It is true that if, as the American Federation of Labor desires, severe restrictions could be placed upon future immigration, organization would probably be benefited for a time, because of a resulting shortage in the labor supply and the consequently greater readiness of employers to make terms with their workmen. These superior strategical advantages for the latter would not be permanent, however, since in the course of time industry would adjust itself

[77] Hourwich, p. 349.
[78] Ibid., p. 350.

more or less to the new labor supply. If, as is contended by Dr. Hourwich, immigration has occurred only in response to a legitimate demand for labor, the immigrant cannot be held responsible for overstocking the labor market and thereby impeding the progress of organization.

The real explanation of the difficulty which has been experienced in effecting organization among our immigrant workers is to be found, it would seem, not in the character of these workers as immigrants, but in their character as unskilled laborers; and the principal problem to be solved in organizing them is not so much that of overcoming their opposition to or hesitancy about joining a union or engaging in a strike, as that of binding them steadily to the union so that stable and continuous organization may take the place of ephemeral combinations, formed simply for the purpose of obtaining some immediate advantage.

The methods employed by trade unions for the purpose of making organization stable have been shown to be (1) education, whereby workmen may come to foresee the benefits to be derived from united action, so that they may realize the necessity of permanent organization in order to make this effective and willingly make present sacrifice in the shape of payment of dues for the sake of future gains; (2) the ostracism of non-unionists; (3) direct appeal to the self-regarding motives of the individual in the shape of (a) benefit features, (b) personal protection, or (c) some form of the closed shop, either preferential or absolute. How far are these methods applicable to unskilled, immigrant, or female workers?

The appeal made by the prospect of future gains, we have seen, is not strong because of the lower intelligence of these workers or the temporary character of their employment; and the latter characteristic interferes seriously with the effectiveness of the method of education. It was also seen that the method of appeal through benefit features is not available for effective use because of the two characteristics mentioned above and because of the inability or unwilling-

ness of the workers to contribute adequate dues. The appeal through the personal protection afforded by the union may in some instances prove of value, as in the case of the United Mine Workers and the Ladies' Garment Workers, where piece-work systems prevail and injustice or discrimination frequently arises in the payment for work or the distribution thereof. In general, however, the value of personal protection is likely to appear smaller to workers of lower intelligence or to those of shifting habits than to permanent employees of a high degree of intelligence, such as are most of the employees in the train service of railroads, who are anxious to keep their records unspotted and for whom discharge may mean a calamity, as far as their railroad careers are concerned. In the course of time, with the growth of public opinion in favor of trade unionism, the method of ostracism may prove efficacious. At the present time, however, the experience of the Industrial Workers of the World with unskilled workers would lead us to place little confidence in this method.

It should, of course, be the aim of all unions seeking to effect stable organization among the classes of workers which we have been considering to employ all of these policies as far as possible. However, the chief reliance of the unions of these workers in making organization stable must be placed, it seems, in the establishment of some sort of closed shop. Under the proper conditions, as discussed in Chapter III, the preferential union shop may be sufficient. Where these conditions are not present, however, it may be necessary to resort to the closed shop in the strict sense. It has been pointed out that the closed shop is extensively employed by most unions in this country, both of skilled and unskilled workers. Where the workers in an occupation are so largely of a shifting character as are the classes which we have been considering in this chapter, the closed shop is an especially valuable, almost essential, device for maintaining stability in organization. When the closed shop is employed, attention need no longer be directed to organizing

the individual but to organizing the shop or unit of industry. The organization of the unit of industry being accomplished, the organization of the individuals embraced within that unit follows automatically. Thus, although individuals may be continually entering and leaving an occupation, causing, therefore, a state of constant flux in the membership of the union, nevertheless the union itself maintains its integrity; just as a river at a certain point, though never containing at two successive moments the same particles of water, remains none the less a river.

## CHAPTER VI

### The Small Business

Under our present competitive regime, the economic wants of society are satisfied through the efforts of men organized in business units of various forms and innumerable sizes. Among all these kinds of business units there stand forth two extremes. At the one end is the small shop run by a single man or perhaps a partnership, in which no workman is employed, unless it may be an apprentice or helper. This is the so-called "one-man shop." The other extreme is found in the gigantic corporation which has succeeded in bringing under its control the major portion of an industry, or at least a considerable portion of an industry, so that it possesses elements of monopolistic power. From the form assumed by the first of such combinations of capital, this kind of business unit has become known as a "trust." These two extremes of business units, the "one-man shop" and the "trust," have caused, in the experience of trade unions in this country, peculiar difficulties in the organizing of labor. It is into these difficulties that we shall now inquire.

*The One-Man Shop.*—Trade unionism, as an institution, has its basis in the differentiation which has arisen under modern capitalistic production between two separate and distinct classes, the employing class and the employed class. But the proprietor of the one-man shop is neither employer nor employee. He is, accordingly, an anomaly in our present industrial society; he is a relic of a by-gone age, an age in which this type of business organization was widely prevalent, and in which, consequently, provision was made for his control in the then dominant system of industrial regulation, the gild system. The craft gild supported the inter-

ests of the full master members of the craft as against the interests of those in the journeyman stage, and enforced the custom of the trade in hours, materials, methods of manufacture, and often in prices. Such a regulative scheme was obviously well suited to the control of the one-man shop. But trade unionism, instead of undertaking such regulation of a trade as a whole, is concerned primarily, if not exclusively, with the interests of the wage-earners in the trade. Consequently, employers are not usually admitted to active membership in trade unions, because it is deemed that the interests of employer and employee might not always be in harmony; and the admission of the former to the council halls of the latter would result in the defeat of the very purpose for which the union was formed. Nevertheless, while it is true that the union is concerned primarily with the interests of the wage-earners, it does not follow that there is no regulation of the trade as a whole. As a matter of fact, under a strong union, where a standard rate and standard working-day are in force, there is a very real regulation of the conditions of competition, in that the labor cost to each employer is made the same. Hence we see that the regulation of competition is determined by the regulation of the conditions of employment.

The one-man shop, however, finds no place in such a scheme of regulation, inasmuch as there are no employees in such a shop. As a result, the competition of this shop is unregulated; its proprietor is left free to work at prices that are out of the question for an employer compelled to pay the regular union rate of wages,[1] and to prolong his hours of labor to a time far beyond the limits fixed by the regulation of the union.[2] In fact, the intensity of competition for business insures the working out of this result.

[1] Business Agent Moore of the plumbers and steamfitters' local union in Baltimore said that small master plumbers would do work for $65 for which the large employers would receive $100 (Interview in October, 1914).

[2] See review of speech of President Alpine of the Plumbers, before the convention of the Master Plumbers' Association in 1912 (Plumbers' Journal, September, 1912, p. 10).

It was to provide against just such destructive competition of masters for business that the regulations of the old craft gilds were formed, and similarly it was to provide against the competition of workmen for employment that the modern trade unions have been organized. The result of the presence of these small shops is the undermining of the strength of the union, since the large employer of labor is compelled to meet the competition of such shops, and, in doing so, feels himself handicapped by regulations in regard to wages and hours that do not apply to the small competitor. For this reason the difficulty of the union in obtaining its demands is enhanced and the strength of the organization is weakened.

The difficulties in connection with the one-man shop are exemplified in the experience of the United Association of Journeymen Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters, and Steam Fitters' Helpers and the Journeymen Barbers' International Union, two unions which have pursued different policies in their efforts to regulate their trades. The Plumbers have followed the ordinary trade-union method, seeking to regulate wages and hours of labor. The Barbers' method, on the other hand, is similar to that of the old gild; it consists in a more direct control of the trade through the regulation of prices and the hours of opening and closing. In addition to the consideration of the experiences of these two unions, there will be mentioned also the manner in which the problem of the one-man shop has been felt in the International Typographical Union, a union which, like the Plumbers, follows the ordinary trade-union method in its efforts at regulation, but which has pursued a different policy with reference to the one-man shop.

The United Association of Journeymen Plumbers is an organization primarily concerned with the interests of the wage-worker, and seeks simply to regulate his conditions of employment. But the proprietor of the one-man shop is not a wage-earner. If not already an employer, he is at least what might be called an embryo employer, whose am-

bition it is some day to have wage-earners working for him. As such, his point of view and his interests are essentially different from, if not actually inimical to, those of the wage-earner.[3] Consequently, his admission to the union is considered inadvisable, and the constitution accordingly provides that "any member of the United Association who starts in business for himself must withdraw from the United Association."[4]

It appears, however, that the constitutional provision in regard to the withdrawal of members who go in business for themselves is not always rigidly adhered to. One who had long been a faithful member as a journeyman might be allowed to retain membership after setting up for himself, and members out on strike who pick up odd jobs would not be compelled to withdraw. In 1906 the constitution was amended so as to provide that a withdrawal card should be granted to a member starting in business for himself only upon approval of the local union and the general secretary.[5] This was done to thwart an alleged practice of employers, which was, in case of a strike, to make their employees small stockholders in their firms and then have them withdraw from the union and thus break up the strike. It

[3] Thus at the convention of the United Association in 1910, in discussing the question of the admission of master plumbers, Delegate Mooney of New Haven stated that in his city there were 123 shops and that 76 of these belonged to master plumbers, who did their own work and employed no members of the organization. The local union had a membership of 132. In case the law of the union were amended so as to give master plumbers the privilege of retaining their membership in the union, he asks, "Where would our local union come out in that case?" Vice-President O'Connell said that he did not see how a man could be an employer and yet work consistently for the interests of the journeymen's organization (Proceedings, 1910, p. 78).

[4] Constitution, 1913, sec. 91. The Journeymen Horseshoers' Union admits master horseshoers employing not more than one journeyman. The secretary stated, however, that the union did not make much effort to bring in these men and that they were not desirable members. They endeavored, he said, to keep the organization out of other shops in order that they might restrict the advantages which accrue from the right to use the union label or to be recognized as a union shop (Interview with H. S. Marshall, secretary, Cincinnati, August 26, 1914).

[5] Constitution, 1906, sec. 86.

was claimed that the same method was used to break up local unions in small towns.[6] In 1910 the constitutional provision was changed to its present form. The provision is that any member who starts in business for himself must withdraw from the United Association, and that withdrawal cards shall be issued by the general secretary-treasurer upon application for them by local unions; but no withdrawal cards may be issued to alleged stockholders, and local unions must refuse to allow members to work in shops where such stockholding is permitted.[7] According to this section, no master plumber has a constitutional right to membership in the union. Nevertheless, some discrimination is left to the local union, and under certain circumstances, as mentioned above, it may be that no withdrawal card for a man in business for himself is applied for by the local union.[8]

It might seem that this difficulty could be avoided by a provision that the proprietor of the one-man shop might remain in the organization, not as an active member, but as a passive member, with a right to the benefits of the union and the use of the union card, provided he observed in good faith the regulations of the union as far as possible; for example, those in regard to hours of labor. A passive member, however, would not have the right to attend the union meetings and would not have any voice in its government. The Tailors' Industrial Union[9] and the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' International Alliance and Bartenders' International League of America have such a provision.[10] But this arrangement does not solve the problem. In the first place, there may be no inducement to the small proprietor

[6] Report of General Organizer Burke, Proceedings, 1906, p. 29.
[7] Constitution, 1910, sec. 91.
[8] At the convention of the Plumbers in 1910 the credentials of one Frank G. Merryweather as a delegate were rejected on the ground that he was an employer. When asked whether this meant that the convention had gone on record as unseating every master plumber in the hall, President Alpine replied that the matter under consideration was simply the case of Brother Merryweather (Proceedings, 1910, p. 79).
[9] Book of Laws, 1914, sec. 55.
[10] Constitution, 1913, sec. 83.

to belong to the union. He is not directly concerned in the efforts of the union to increase wages, since he himself is not a wage-earner; and he is averse to having the union regulate his hours of labor, since the longer he works, the larger are his earnings. It is true that union membership might prove advantageous to him where the use of the union label is very valuable, or where the union shop is so universal and union sentiment so strong that possession of a union card becomes an important element in ability to secure work. But a large part of plumbing is simply jobbing work, for example, work in private homes; and in the obtaining of most of such work a union card is no advantage.[11]

Moreover, even supposing the proprietor of the one-man shop willing to come into the union as a passive member, there would be nothing to prevent his cutting prices in order to obtain business, and it would be difficult to keep under surveillance the length of his working day. In a speech before the National Master Plumbers' Association in 1912, President Alpine of the Plumbers' Union asserted that the one-man shop, or the shop composed of so-called stockholders, where work was performed without regard to the limitation of the working-day, was a distinct disadvantage to the journeyman, as the men in such shops were usurping the places of the union mechanics. He declared also that this class of shops was especially detrimental to the "legitimate" master plumber because of the unfair competition presented.[12]

It is in connection with this difficulty of supervision that the experience of the International Typographical Union throws valuable light upon the problem of the one-man shop. In this organization proprietors working at the trade are admitted to active membership in the union. The attitude of union members toward the small proprietor, probably a fellow-unionist struggling to advance himself, has been, gen-

[11] President Alpine stated that journeymen plumbers employed by small masters doing jobbing work were much more difficult to organize than those employed in doing large contract work (Interview, September 4, 1914).

[12] Plumbers' Journal, September, 1912, p. 10.

erally speaking, one of sympathy, and he has been allowed the use of the label. After a somewhat acrimonious contention other unions in the printing industry have been induced to adopt the same policy. However, it appears that these proprietors have not always observed in good faith the regulations of the union. An executive committee recently reported:

> Complaints have been made to this committee from time to time by employers that there are numerous small printing plants, so-called 'bedroom print shops,' owned and operated by members of this union, which compete with them, and that inasmuch as the work in these plants is done at night, after the owner has completed a day's work, they are constantly underbid on such work as is done by these offices. We find in these cases that the men work in the daytime and in spare hours solicit jobs, set them up, do the presswork themselves and in all respects operate small plants in addition to their regular employment, and that they do compete with other proprietors employing members of this union on small commercial work.[13]

President Lynch says:

> One of the strongest objections the bona fide employer has to the union label is its use by the small proprietor. It is claimed, and in many cases the evidence is at hand, that by reason of his opportunity to work any number of hours soliciting and executing work, and with one or two platen presses, a few cases of type and the union label, the small proprietor can cut the life out of prices for the work that his mechanical facilities will permit him to take. On the other hand, the bona fide employer is compelled to pay his solicitor, and of necessity the latter's work is confined to the business day. The real employer is also expected to pay the union scale, which carries with it union hours. Unless there is radical reform in the method of supervision of the small shop with the label, under which the proprietor will be compelled to confine his soliciting and mechanical execution, together with all other work necessary to the conduct of his business, to an eight-hour day, then there must be a reversal of our present attitude toward the small shop.[14]

We see then that under the strictly trade-union method of regulating a trade, that is, the regulation of wages and hours of labor, no adequate provision is made for the proprietor of the one-man shop, who is left free to carry on his competition upon his own terms; and that this competition is a direct disadvantage to the employer and an indirect one to the union, which finds its control over the

[13] Proceedings, International Typographical Union, 1907, p. 17.
[14] Ibid.

conditions of labor in the trade lessened thereby. The degree to which the one-man shop hinders organization depends, of course, upon the comparative amount of business controlled by such shops. If this amount is very small, the effect upon organization may be negligible. However, if the business of the one-man shops constitutes a considerable proportion of the total business in the trade at a particular place, this competition will prove a decided obstacle to organization. Imagine, for instance, the case of a small town where there are ten job printing establishments. Two of these are shops employing four journeymen each, and the other eight are one-man shops. Suppose the proprietors of the one-man shops to engage in all the practices that have just been described. Would it be possible for the proprietors of the two larger establishments, if compelled to pay union wages and run their shops only eight hours a day, to continue in competition? They would either be forced out of business or be compelled to pay their journeymen a wage corresponding to the earnings of the proprietors of the one-man shop. In either case the attempt of the union to improve conditions would fail, and with this failure the union could not last long. It has already been noted that among the plumbers, organization has been much more difficult in the jobbing branch of the trade, where the competition of the one-man shop is very great, than in the branch engaged in building construction, where most of the shops are of a large size.

With active competition from one-man shops and no regulation of their prices or hours, trade unionism would become impossible. In view of this fact, the Journeyman Barbers' International Union has pursued another policy in reference to the one-man shop. The barber's craft is one of the few that have undergone practically no change since the time of the so-called industrial revolution. In fact, it is typical of the manner in which all crafts were carried on before that period. In the ordinary barber shop we find the master or boss barber, with several journeymen and pos-

sibly an apprentice, just as we might have found them during the Middle Ages. The employer works in the shop side by side with the employee. There is no great gulf between them in social position, and the employee is not likely to consider his interests antagonistic to those of his employer, but rather identical. He does not think that his own wages are small because his employer is appropriating an excessive share of the total proceeds of the business, but because those proceeds are too small. This feeling is evident in the attitude of the journeymen's union. In an editorial in the journal the attitude of the union is set forth as follows: "The J. B. I. U. of A. [Journeymen Barbers' International Union of America] as a union was not organized for the purpose of fighting the employers as so many seem to think. It was formed for, and still exists for, the betterment of the barber craft, boss and journeyman alike."[15] It has doubtless been this conception of interests which has determined the policy of the union. The union has not simply made demands for higher wages and shorter hours, but has devoted its efforts to regulating prices and hours of opening and closing, abolishing Sunday labor, and pressing the passage of license laws, in order that the evils of excessive competition might be overcome, the income of the trade as a whole increased, and thereby the profits of the employer and the wages of the employee also increased.

We see, then, that just as the barber's craft resembles the typical medieval craft rather than the typical great modern industry, so the method of the barbers' union, with its endeavor to regulate the industry as a whole, resembles that of the medieval craft gild rather than that of the modern trade union. In such a scheme of regulation the proprietor of the one-man shop finds a logical and natural place. Although he is not directly interested in what wages are paid, he is very much interested in the prices which he is to obtain in his business; and the union, considering its own interests as bound up with those of the master barber, does

[15] Journeyman Barber, April, 1905, p. 70.

not feel it necessary to exclude the one-man shop proprietor from its ranks. Accordingly, not only is he admitted to the union, but a very considerable proportion of the union membership is composed of such proprietors.[16] In this scheme of regulation it would not be illogical to include employing barbers also. Such organizations have been formed, but the union claims that many years of experience have demonstrated the absolute impossibility of success with them. It is asserted that attempts to form strictly employers' associations have failed because of the excessive competition and jealousy among the employers;[17] and it is feared that these characteristics, if employers were in the same organization with the journeymen, would act as a handicap in the efforts of the latter to regulate competition.[18]

During the past seven or eight years there has been, however, considerable criticism of the method of regulation employed by the union, and a demand has been made for the adoption of what has been called the "new system." The new system is nothing else than the regular method of the ordinary trade union, that is, fixing of standard wages and a standard working-day, and leaving the employer to charge any price he may please and to open and close as he desires, provided the standard wage is paid and standard hours of labor are maintained.

The demand for this new system has arisen, not because of any increased hostility on the part of journeymen toward their employers, but because of the futility of the efforts of the union to bring about or to maintain in various places agreements among employers as to uniform prices and uniform hours of opening and closing. It is particularly in the large cities that this failure of the efforts of the union has been evident. Thus a correspondent from the Chicago local union writes to the journal: "It is perhaps an easy matter to get fifteen or twenty barber shops in a town to

[16] A writer in the Journeyman Barber, July, 1910, p. 167, estimated that forty per cent of the membership was composed of proprietors of one-man shops.

[17] Journeyman Barber, September, 1905, p. 182.

[18] Barbers' Journal, March, 1899, p. 44.

agree to one price and one closing hour, but to attempt the same scheme in a city with several thousand shops you are apt to find yourself up against one of the hardest propositions ever dreamed of."[19] Other letters tend to confirm the truth of this assertion. The diversified classes of customers to which barber shops cater, the mixture of races among the barbers, and the very number of shops, all make it impracticable to bring about or to maintain agreements for uniform prices or hours of opening and closing. Consequently there has been a failure to organize the large cities. In 1906, when the total membership of the union was approximately 25,000, it was stated that seven of the largest cities showed a membership of 1800 where they should have had 20,000.[20] The attempt has been made to overcome the above-mentioned obstacles through the plan of dividing the city up into districts and forming agreements for each district. But although some degree of success is claimed for this plan, and although it may dispose of the difficulty caused by the large number of shops in a city, it does not dispose of that caused by their diversity of character. Moreover, such divisions would necessarily be artificial, so that while one proprietor in a certain district under the agreement might be charging the prices agreed upon, his competitor across the street or around the corner, outside of that district, might be cutting his prices and drawing away his customers. The result has been a demand for the adoption of the new system. Thus the writer quoted above goes on to say: "On the other hand, if an attempt was made to bring together say five thousand journeymen in one city with the same object in mind as any other trade or calling, that of getting shorter hours and better wages—say a ten hour day and a ten hour pay, say 25 cents per hour, and to strike if necessary, what would the result be?"[21]

If this system were adopted, however, the union would be confronted with the same problem that has baffled the

[19] Journeyman Barber, April, 1909, p. 61.
[20] Ibid., February, 1906, p. 8.
[21] Ibid., April, 1909, p. 61.

plumbers, namely, the control of the one-man shops. As one writer in the journal has said, the proprietors of the one-man shops have no interest in higher wages and shorter hours, but in return for their moral and financial support the union maintains to the best of its ability uniform prices and closing hours.[22] It has been claimed for the new system that it will enable proprietors of large shops in cities to keep open as long as they desire, according to the class of customers they serve, and at the same time work their journeymen only the standard number of hours by using several shifts. The writer cited above, however, objects to this as follows: "It would be folly to expect the big shop to run two shifts of men and pay both shifts a living wage and compete with the one chair man who works both shifts himself, and the new system will end in longer hours, shorter wages and disruption of our organization."[23]

Such are the difficulties in organizing associated with the one-man shop. Under a system of regulated wages and hours of labor there may be no sufficient inducement to the proprietor of the one-man shop to join the union if he is eligible; and, whether he is admitted or not, no adequate control over him is provided.[24] On the other hand, the system of regulating prices is not well adapted to the organization of large cities.

The problem of the one-man shop, of course, does not exist in those industries where a large plant is indispensable for profitable production. And where this is not the case, the importance of the problem depends upon the extent to which the one-man shop obtains. No statistics to show this are at hand; but in certain crafts, such as those of plumber, barber, tailor, job printer, blacksmith, painter, and carpenter, the number must be large, and in considering the extent of organization in such industries this difficulty must

[22] Journeyman Barber, July, 1910, p. 167.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Supervision would, of course, be easier in some trades than in others. Thus it would be easier to supervise the work of a barber, which is necessarily carried on before the public, than that of a printer, which may be done in his garret.

have due weight. Attention should also be called to the fact that the difficulty associated with the one-man shop exists also in those small shops which employ one or two journeymen but in which the employer also works at the trade. Here, too, there may be the same undermining competition with the lengthening out of the hours of work of the employer. The problem is the same in kind and different only in degree.

*Home Work.*—Similar to the one-man shop in its detrimental effects upon the organization of labor is home work in an industry. Here, it is true, we are treating of wage-earners, not proprietors, but the evil results of the competition engendered are comparable to those in the case of the small shop. Home workers are difficult to reach for purposes of organization. This is due to the fact that they are isolated. Consequently, there is less feeling of community of interest, or class consciousness, than in the case of workers constantly associated with one another. These characteristics make it difficult to bring such workers together for common action. But in case an organization is formed, it is practically impossible to enforce any common rule. Suppose, for instance, that under the impulse of some glaring grievance a number of such workers had been brought into a union, and that a standard rate of pay and standard working-day had been agreed upon with employers. Could such an agreement be enforced? In all probability it could not. While business was exceedingly brisk it might be that the employer, in his anxiety to get out his work in time, would pay the union rate. As soon as business slackened, and the supply of labor was greatly in excess of the demand, however, it is extremely likely that the employer, having a large number of men to choose from, would give his work to the cheapest bidder, namely, the non-unionist. Thus, according to the Webbs, "The common method of reduction is for the employer to produce a garment and say, 'I had this made for 10s. 6d., I cannot pay you 13s. 6d. for a similar article.

You too must make it for 10s. 6d. or go elsewhere.' The Society cannot prevent this."[25]

In a factory where all of the employees are known to the union, violations of the union schedules as to wages or hours will quickly come to light, and a strike may result, to the detriment of the employer. When work is given out to be done at home, however, it would be a stupendous task for the union to keep track of each individual worker. Consequently if during the slack season the unionist were discriminated against, he would not know who was undermining him or where the work was going. But he would know that he had no work, and that the way to obtain it would be to accept the terms of his employer. "Home work, in fact, necessarily involves Individual Bargaining, and makes, moreover, the enforcement of any Common Rule practically impossible. . . . Nor are these insidious effects confined merely to the outworkers. The operatives employed on similar tasks on the employer's premises have to submit to reductions of wages and extensions of hours, under the threat of the diversion of more and more of the business to their out-working competitors. Home work, in fact, makes all Trade Unionism impossible."[26]

The manufacturers in the garment industry have been the largest employers of home workers in this country, and for a number of years the United Garment Workers and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union have steadily fought against the employment of this class of workers. In the six protocols with employers which have recently been adopted by the latter union, involving approximately 115,000 workers, home work has been abolished. The overalls, shirt, and pants branch of the United Garment Workers likewise have formed prohibitive agreements involving 30,000 workers. This union also has some similar agreements in the men's clothing branch.[27] But the practice is

[25] Industrial Democracy, p. 544.
[26] Ibid., pp. 544–545.
[27] Conciliation, Arbitration and Sanitation in the Dress and Waist Industry of New York City, Bulletin of U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Whole No. 145, Appendix H, opposite p. 154.

still widespread. In the report on women and child wage earners in the United States it is said that out of a total of 23,683 wage-earners (not including cutters and trimmers) employed by 244 establishments visited in New York, Chicago, Baltimore, Rochester, and Philadelphia, 1015 were designated on the pay rolls as home workers. "The foregoing figures [however] are not representative of the real proportion of home workers. If a manufacturer with a large inside shop says that he employs no home workers, that statement may be literally true, as he refers only to the inside shop directly operated by him. But, on the other hand, he may manufacture only about one-fifth of his product in his own inside shop, while four-fifths of it may be scattered among a number of contractors, who in turn may give out all of the garments they make to be finished in the homes." The home work system is used proportionately more extensively in New York than elsewhere, and less extensively in Chicago than elsewhere. In New York, where the licensing system is in vogue, 9644 houses were licensed for home work in 1908, according to the report of the factory inspector for that year, and it is a known fact that the vast majority of the houses are occupied by garment workers, chiefly home finishers.[28]

*Contractor System.*—Closely associated in practice with the prevalence of home work in the clothing industry and, judged by its effects upon the organizability of labor, likewise undesirable, is the contractor system. Under this form of business organization the garments are cut on the premises of the manufacturer, but instead of being finished there, they are farmed out to competing contractors who either run small shops of their own, employing about ten or twenty operators, or subcontract the work out to individuals who take it to their own homes. Since we have already considered the case of the home worker, we shall here be concerned only with the case of the contractor who runs a shop of his own.

[28] Report on Women and Child Wage Earners in the United States, vol. ii, pp. 215–219.

In the first place, there is in this case, as in the case of the home workers, the difficulty due to the isolation, the comparative inaccessibility, of the workers. "Through him [the contractor] the industry is scattered over a wide area, among all kinds of people, and he thrives as long as they do not know one another. The contractor is an important factor in the clannishness of immigrant nationalities. It is in part due to him that we have in large cities the Jewish districts, Polish districts, Swedish districts, etc., with very little assimilation. The contractors establish their shops in the heart of the district where the people live, and since they can practically earn their living at home, they have no opportunity of mingling with others or of learning from the civilization of other peoples."[29] Consequently there is here also less opportunity for the development of that feeling of community of interests, less room for the spread of the creed of trade unionism, so necessary for the growth of organization, than is the case when the workers are brought together in a large factory, where the newly arrived immigrant rubs elbows with his more Americanized and sophisticated compatriot, and learns, among other things, the doctrine of unionism. Under these conditions we might say that the difficulty of bringing about organization among workers under the contract system is due, not so much to any inherent qualities in that system itself, as to the coexistence of that system with a large supply of newly arrived immigrant labor.[30] In fact, it has frequently happened that the ranks of the United Garment Workers' Union have been swelled temporarily by many thousands through the influx, under the impulse of some special grievance, of the workers in contractor shops.[31] Therefore, when speaking of the difficulty of effecting organization among these workers on account of inaccessibility, we must

[29] J. R. Commons, "Sweating System in the Clothing Trade," in Trade Unionism and Labor Problems, p. 319.

[30] It has been estimated that 10,000 immigrants are absorbed by the garment-working trades each year (Bulletin No. 98, Bureau of Labor, p. 204).

[31] The Garment Worker, August, 1898, p. 13.

be understood as meaning the inaccessibility of these recent immigrants, whom the small contractor, thoroughly acquainted with conditions in his particular neighborhood, can segregate into comparative isolation for a time.[32]

The fundamental difficulty, however, with the contract system as it exists under the conditions in the garment industry is the extreme difficulty of maintaining successfully a union or preferential union shop agreement. Such an agreement, if observed in good faith by an employer, would be an effective means of preventing the decimation of the union ranks after a large strike, such as we have seen to be characteristic of the garment industry. The carrying out of such an agreement would be a simple matter in the plant of some large manufacturer. Every garment worker employed in the factory would become automatically a member of the union. There is no such clear sailing, however, in the case of the contractor shops. Here it is the contractor who is the employer of the labor, and any agreement made must be made with him. But the employer is under no obligation to employ any particular contractor. He gives out his work where it is done for the lowest price, and has no concern with the agreements which the contractor may have formed with his employees. Consequently, if the contractor asks of the manufacturer higher prices because the union has demanded more wages or shorter hours, there is left to the manufacturer the alternative of bestowing his patronage upon a rival contractor. Now, of course, this plan could be defeated provided the organization of all, or of a very large proportion of, the contractor shops had been accomplished; but in the garment industry the difficulty has consisted in the great numbers of immigrants constantly flooding the industry, in the small capital required to start a shop, and in the cutthroat competition for business among the contractors. Thus one contractor can be played off against another, the union rate undermined, and the strength of the organization sapped.

[32] Commons, Sweating System in the Clothing Trade, p. 319.

A remedy for this state of affairs is to be found in the formulation of agreements with the manufacturers providing that contract work must be given out to union shops. Such an agreement, however, must obviously be formed by the employees of the manufacturer; consequently the probability of its formation depends upon the extent to which the contracting system exists in the industry. If the system exists to only a slight extent, and the employer must depend chiefly upon his inside help, he might form such an agreement rather than be troubled with a strike at his plant. But, on the other hand, if the principal supply of his labor came from these outside contractor shops, he could probably break the strike of his inside workers by the diversion of his material to the outside workers. Of course, in this case the possibility of success for the workers would also depend upon the extent of the support received from such inside workers as cutters, examiners, and bushelmen, who are employed only inside the factory.

The practice in the men's clothing industry of giving out work to contractors is very extensive. It has been estimated that more than fifty per cent of the total output in the industry is made up in this way. New York is the great home of the system, while Chicago and Baltimore probably make less clothing in this way than any other cities in the country.[33] In the overalls industry, however, the work seems to be carried on exclusively in factories. It is perhaps of some significance that it is in this branch of the industry that the garment workers have been most successful in organizing.[34]

[33] Report on Women and Child Wage-earners in the United States, vol. ii, pp. 414–419.

[34] Report on Women and Child Wage-earners in the United States, vol. x, p. 168. The success in organizing overalls workers must be assigned principally, however, to the use of the union label.

## CHAPTER VII

### Trusts and Employers' Associations

*Trusts.*—At the other end of the scale from the type of business organization which we have heretofore been considering is the trust. Here the obstacle in the way of the organization of labor is the opposite of that which was discussed in the preceding chapter. Here it is not the inability of the union to control excessive and insidious competition that stands in the way of trade unionism. Rather it is the very absence of adequate competition. Nor is the difficulty in this case, as in that of the small shop, that the fundamental basis of trade unionism, the differentiation of two separate and distinct classes, employer and employee, is lacking, for it is here that this condition exists in its most perfect form.[1] It is here that the employee labors under the greatest disadvantage in competition with thousands of his fellow workers under the process of individual bargaining with the employer, who possesses the advantage of having a restricted field of competing employers bidding for the same labor that he desires. It seems that here above all is the place where trade unionism is necessary for the purposes of collective bargaining. In just this field, however, are to be found the most glaring examples of its complete break-down.

The fundamental factor in this situation is the superior strategical strength of the employer under such a form of business organization. This superior strategical strength is due to three causes: (1) the greater financial resources of the trust and the difficulty of the union in obtaining a sub-

[1] Where a corporation like the United States Steel Corporation encourages its employees to purchase its stock, this statement needs some qualification.

stantial foothold in the industry; (2) the control by the trust over a number of plants; (3) the restriction of the area of employment for the men. Each of these causes will be discussed in turn.

The most favorable conditions for the growth of trade unionism are to be found where there are within an industry a comparatively large number of business units of a fair size, that is, units considerably larger than the one-man shop, but possessing only moderate financial resources. When this is the case, there must always exist among such units various degrees of susceptibility to organization, making possible a gradual expansion of the union. In the case of one employer business may be prospering, large orders may be coming in, and any interruption to the operation of his plant may mean serious financial loss. Another, on the contrary, may be hovering on the brink of bankruptcy, able to pull through, barring serious mishaps, but conscious that a tying up of his plant or business will mean his utter ruin. Finally, there may be other employers who, for some reason or other—perhaps a previous connection with some labor organization themselves, perhaps a belief in the principles and faith in the expediency of trade unions—are more or less sympathetically inclined toward the organization of their labor force. It is among such firms as these that there exists the possibility that the union may gain a foothold. Once the organization of these plants has been achieved, the union can turn its attention to the harder tasks, to those firms which possess greater financial resources, which are less liable to loss of business through the closing of their plants, and which have the greatest animosity toward trade unionism. Under these circumstances every gain made by the union means a strengthening of its strategical position in that its financial resources are increased and its control over the labor supply is enhanced; and this is accompanied by a corresponding weakening of the strategical position of the still non-union employer in that the possibilities of combination with fellow-

employers for combating the union are lessened, and the field from which he can draw his labor supply in time of trouble is restricted.

The United Mine Workers, having in the course of years gradually built up powerful organizations in the States of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Iowa, Arkansas, Montana, Washington, Wyoming, and certain parts of Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Michigan, Missouri, and Kentucky, have been able, with the backing received from the unionists of these States, to devote their attention to the organization of such districts as West Virginia, Alabama, Colorado, and parts of Pennsylvania, where in the past they have always experienced the greatest difficulty in effecting permanent organization. The union is able to keep several scores of organizers in the field and to pour hundreds of thousands of dollars into those districts which it is determined to organize. In the eleven years from 1900 to 1910 inclusive the union expended for strike relief purposes over $1,400,000 in the anthracite regions of Pennsylvania, nearly $500,000 in the bituminous regions of Central Pennsylvania, over $700,000 in Colorado, nearly the same amount in West Virginia, nearly $1,300,000 in Alabama, and almost $1,000,000 in Nova Scotia. In all of these districts, it is true, the union had, according to the membership for November, 1913, as yet been unsuccessful, except in the anthracite regions of Pennsylvania. Here its efforts at last seem to be bearing fruit, as from December, 1911, to December, 1913, the membership of the three anthracite districts increased from approximately 20,000 to 100,000. Whether this increase will be lasting it is difficult to say, though it is probable that it will.

We may contrast the strategical strength of a union like this, having a membership of 400,000 and an income running up to $2,000,000[2] per year, with the strategical strength of a union like the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, with its 5000 members and its income of

[2] Proceedings, 1914, Report of Secretary.

$200,000.[3] If, moreover, we remember that this small union with its slender resources has before it a field for organization larger even than that before the Mine Workers, we can see what a difference it may make to the strategical strength of a union to have a large number of business units through which its membership and finances can be gradually built up. Where these units are lacking, it is the employer who holds the stronger strategical position from which to fight the union. Although the union in the presence of these large combinations of capital is hindered from building up its own resources, those of the corporation itself are all the greater because of the combination.

In the second place, the trust possesses a strategical advantage because of its control of a number of plants. The ordinary employer, running but a single plant, is entirely dependent upon that one for the filling of his orders. Consequently the shut down of that plant for any length of time means a delay, not to say a failure, in the filling of such orders, and probably as a result the loss of his patronage. Under these conditions a strike may cause disastrous consequences to an employer, unless, of course, he is able to fill up the places of the strikers. However, in the case of a large corporation controlling a number of plants no such dire results need follow from the shut-down of one of its plants. A cause of irritation and loss it may well be, but by no means a complete paralysis of the business. For example, the National Biscuit Company runs about fifty factories. The shut-down of one factory, provided it was of average size, would mean a loss of only two per cent in total output, and in all probability this could be made up by an increase in the output of some of the other forty-nine plants. Similar conditions exist in the steel industry, and in the tobacco industry where a great number of plants are under more or less unified control. Examples could be multiplied. If a strike occurs in one place, the company

[3] Report on Conditions of Employment in the Iron and Steel Industry in the United States, vol. iii, p. 136. The total receipts in 1911 were $204,847.58.

can simply close down that factory and supply its more pressing requirements from the other plants. The Bakery and Confectionery Workers charge that this is what was done by the National Biscuit Company in Chicago in 1903. "This situation endured for six months, when the bakers' organization had been practically disrupted and its members brought to the stage of starvation, the international organization being no longer able to support the idle toilers. Then the cracker trust reopened its Chicago plants, and anyone known to be at all sympathetic toward union labor was denied work. The same situation developed in Boston, Mass., Cleveland, Ohio, and New York City."[4]

In the steel industry, before the complete ousting of the union from the United States Steel Corporation, the charge was made by the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers that the corporation diverted as large a proportion of orders as possible to non-union mills instead of distributing the work evenly in proportion to the capacity of the plants. The attitude of the corporation is also brought out in the minutes of the executive committee for July 2, 1901, at the time when the question of signing the scale for three mills, which had been considered non-union in the preceding year, was under consideration. No definite conclusion was reached at this time, but the chairman, whose decision carried the greatest weight, stated that he would be willing to concede two mills as union mills, and to sign the scale for the McKeesport mill, but that he would keep the latter mill shut down. This policy had also been practiced by other companies prior to the formation of the corporation.[5] The destructive effects of such a policy can be clearly perceived if we examine the figures showing the defunct local unions of the Amalgamated Association. Of 648 unions which are reported as having passed out of existence during various years (twenty years in all) from 1881 to

[4] Bakers' Journal, February 15, 1913, p. 2, "Saving the Nation's Bread," by J. L. Engdahl.

[5] Report on Conditions of Employment in the Iron and Steel Industry in the United States, vol. iii, pp. 119–120.

1905, in the case of 188, or 29 per cent, stoppage of the mill is assigned as the cause.[6]

Through its control of a number of plants a company may not only shut down one factory during labor trouble, but, in case it is desired to continue that factory in operation, it may supply the labor force from the other factories of the company. It is charged that this was one of the reasons why the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen were defeated in 1904 in the great strike in the packing houses of Chicago, it being claimed that the skilled cattle butchers were brought from the plants of the packers in other cities.

Finally, the large monopolistic corporation possesses a strategical advantage because of the restriction of the area of employment which is open to the men and the consequently enlarged possibilities of discrimination on the part of the company against members of trade unions. This is the charge most frequently made by the unions against these corporations. It is made by the Iron and Steel Workers, by the Tobacco Workers, by the Bakers and Confectioners, and by the Commercial Telegraphers. It is easy to see at what a disadvantage an aspiring unionist may be if the management of the corporation is opposed to trade unionism. If a carpenter were to be discharged by a contractor because of his connection with a union and reemployment refused him, only a small percentage of his opportunity for employment would be taken away. Therefore fear of discharge will probably not be a great deterrent to his affiliation with a trade union. The larger, however, the proportion of the total industry controlled by one company, the greater obviously is the danger of this discrimination to the unionist, and in case of monopoly the result may be utter inability to obtain work.

[6] These figures were tabulated from the reports of the president, contained in the proceedings, and include the following years: 1881–1891 (each year), 1893, 1894, 1895, 1897, 1899, 1900, 1902, 1904, 1905. In all these cases the mill was not closed down in order to destroy the union. The stoppage of work may have been due simply to lack of orders. But whatever the cause of the stoppage, the effect upon the union was the same.

We may thus have what amounts practically to a blacklist without the necessity of a formal agreement to that effect. The telegraph business provides a good example.

> In the case of the commercial telegraph operator he has practically only two employers, the Western Union and the Postal Company. If either company dismisses for good cause a man whom they for perfectly valid reasons are unwilling to have in their employ in one office it might easily follow that they would not wish him to be employed in any one of their offices, and would accordingly notify all managers not to give employment to this person. The action of a single company, therefore, would close to the operator a very large part of his possible opportunities for employment. If either company chose to include activity in union matters or attempts to organize its employees, or participation in the agitation leading to a strike, as reasons for barring a man from employment, it could by merely notifying its own offices create a condition which, so far as that man was concerned, would result in practically the same thing as a blacklist in another line of industry entered into by a very large number of employers but not by all of those in his trade. In a word, the commercial telegraph operator, wherever he goes throughout the length and breadth of the United States, finds everywhere practically the same two employers. If these two employers enter into an agreement, the situation is practically hopeless to the operator.[7]

It is, therefore, quite evident that where an industry is dominated by a large monopolistic corporation and that corporation is determined to stamp out trade unionism, organizers of labor, having to deal with a class of men whose very livelihood depends upon their retention of the favor of the company, find themselves struggling under a handicap of tremendous proportions.

As to the extent to which such discrimination is actually practiced on the part of these great monopolistic corporations, it is extremely difficult to establish any definite conclusions. A discharge which is really on account of participation in union activities need not be accompanied by the statement of any specified reason. There can be no doubt that a considerable number of men sincerely believe that they were blacklisted by the telegraph companies for their activity in the strike of 1907,[8] and it has been repeatedly

[7] Investigation of Western Union and Postal Telegraph Cable Companies, S. Doc. No. 725, 60th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 40.

[8] Ibid., p. 39.

charged by the union that dismissals have been made on account of the union connections of the men,[9] and that the Western Union undertook in 1912 a systematic scheme for the detection of membership in the union on the part of its employees.[10]

Whether or not the companies have adopted the drastic methods decried by the union, it is certain that since the strike of 1907, at least, they have strongly opposed the organization of their employees and have taken steps to prevent the growth of the union. At the close of the strike of 1907 the Postal Company formed among its employees an association, made attractive to them by benefits paid by the company during periods of disability involving loss of wages. The association was restricted to employees of the Postal Company, and each employee desiring membership was required to agree not to retain membership or accept membership in any union while in the employ of the company.[11] In the case of the Western Union Company the clause in the leased-wire contracts requiring that operators employed by wire lessees "shall be subject to the approval of and satisfactory to the company leasing the wires" has been made use of to prevent the growth of the Telegraphers' Union. On account of the opposition of the Western Union, one company, a large lessee of Western Union wire, a company which had had satisfactory agreements with the Telegraphers' Union, was forced to refrain from renewing its agreement because of the pressure exerted by the Western Union, which had demanded the abrogation of the former contract with the union and the discharge of those employees who did not agree to withdraw from the union.[12]

Against various other large corporations similar indictments are made as to discharge of men for membership in

[9] For example, see Report of President Konenkamp to fourth convention, in Commercial Telegraphers' Journal, June, 1912, pp. 230–234.

[10] Commercial Telegraphers' Journal, December, 1913; January, February, March, 1914.

[11] Investigation of Western Union and Postal Telegraph Cable Companies, p. 41.

[12] Ibid., pp. 41–42.

unions. It was asserted by an official of the Tobacco Workers' Union that the American Tobacco Company, having purchased a factory, would send its men among the workers and secretly tell them that, if they did not get out of the organization, they would have to get out of the factory.[13] By the Bakers it is asserted that in 1911 some of the men employed by one of the large baking corporations in Chicago, who had been members of the union before 1903, determined to ally themselves again with it. At a meeting of the Chicago bakers' union eighteen of these men signed applications to become members. On the next day every one of the eighteen men was discharged, one of them, it is claimed, having been a spy. The company would not reinstate them; and the rest of the men, it is said, were frightened into still greater submission.[14]

Of the policy of the United States Steel Corporation, President John Williams of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers said: "The work of organization in our large iron and steel mills is made difficult not alone by the cosmopolitan character of those employed therein but also by the perfect system of espionage that has been established. The spy system is so thorough that any indiscretion is reported, and every attempt to organize is frustrated by a chain of communication that runs through the works as invisibly as an electric current flashes through a copper wire. Added to the spy system is the fear of the blacklist."[15] The attitude of the corporation toward organized labor was foreshadowed early in its history. At a meeting of the executive committee in 1901 the following resolution was presented by Mr. Steele and apparently unanimously approved: "That we are unalterably opposed to any extension of union labor, and advise subsidiary companies to take firm position when these questions come up and say that they are not going to recognize it, that is, any

[13] Speech of I. Mesmer, Label Advertiser of Tobacco Workers, before United Mine Workers' Convention, in Proceedings, United Mine Workers, January, 1908, pp. 209, 210.

[14] Bakers' Journal, February 15, 1913, p. 2.

[15] American Federationist, September, 1912, p. 731.

extension of unions in mills where they do not now exist; that great care should be used to prevent trouble, and that they promptly report and confer with this corporation."[16] A short time later, in pursuance of this policy, twelve men who were endeavoring to institute a lodge were discharged from the Wellsville sheet mill.[17]

In 1912 the American Federation of Labor devised a plan whereby these unfavorable conditions were to be overcome. It was announced by Mr. Gompers that an aggressive and systematic scheme for the organization of the iron and steel workers had been formulated. Three sets of circulars were to be issued in several languages and distributed throughout the various centers of the steel industry by representatives of organized labor, speaking these languages. Circular No. 1 was to give notice of the plan to organize. Circular No. 2 was to explain the aims and objects of organized labor, and to describe in part the conditions of the mill workers at that time, as well as to outline what could be accomplished through organization. Concerning the third circular it was stated, "It will inform all workers the day and date of a meeting, and the name and address of the place in which the meeting will be held, so that all will have the opportunity of attending the meeting, and when you attend you will understand that similar meetings are being held in every town, village and hamlet in America where the iron and steel plants are located. The object of having the meetings the same day and date is to effectually prevent discrimination."[18] The plan, however, came to naught, the reason being, it is claimed by the union, that the Steel Corporation obtained control over all the halls for the day on which the meetings were to be held, and no place could be obtained for the men to come together.

These three factors, then—the large financial resources

[16] Minutes of Executive Committee of Steel Corporation, June 17, 1901.

[17] Ibid., July 8, 1901. See also Report on Conditions of Employment in the Iron and Steel Industry in United States, vol. iii, pp. 118–119.

[18] American Federationist, September, 1912, pp. 718, 746.

of the employer, the control over a number of plants, and the restriction of the area of employment for the men—constitute the difficulties associated with labor organization in the trust form of business. In any particular case, however, the importance of these difficulties will depend both upon the proportion of the total industry controlled by the trust and upon the absolute size of the business unit. Thus in coal mining, in spite of the great size of a number of the business units, the union has been able to build up a powerful organization, inasmuch as the proportion of the industry controlled by any one company is relatively small. On the other hand, mere monopoly—for example, the monopoly enjoyed by a local street railway company—does not necessarily involve all three difficulties, for here there may be only small financial resources, and the unionizing of the smaller and more friendly companies may provide the strength needed for carrying on the fight against larger and more hostile companies. Here also customers' demands cannot be supplied from other sources. The third factor, however, the restriction of the area of employment for the men, is operative under the above circumstances, and the consequent fear of discharge on the part of the men is one of the great obstacles in the organizing of street railway companies in some cities. Where the business unit is of such a form that all three factors are present, together with an absolute monopoly of the industry, it is there, of course, that there exist the greatest possibilities of obstruction to the organization of labor. The writer knows of no such extreme case; but the steel industry and the tobacco industry—at least until the recent dissolution of the American Tobacco Company—may be taken as examples of cases involving all the difficulties except the absolute monopoly. From the possibility of almost insuperable difficulties presented by the hypothetical case set forth above, the hindrances to the organization of labor due to the large size of the business unit vary in innumerable degrees according to the extent to which the above-mentioned factors are present.

All three of these factors, it will be observed, are simply elements in the strategical strength possessed by the employers. The extent to which they will operate, therefore, depends upon the attitude of the management of the corporation toward the union. For this reason the difficulties which these factors place in the way of organization have been spoken of as possibilities. Assuming the attitude of the corporation to be one of hostility toward the organization of labor, these possibilities will be completely realized. Even in case the attitude of the corporation is simply one of indifference, where no attempt is made to exterminate trade unionism among its employees but the union is not recognized as an instrument for collective bargaining, the possibilities of difficulty in the organization of labor will be realized to a large extent. Under such circumstances the corporation would possess the above-mentioned strategical advantages in opposing any demand made by the union for recognition or for the closed shop, thereby increasing the difficulty of the union in holding its men in the organization. In case, however, the corporation has come to recognize and to look favorably upon trade unionism, the concentration of business into large, more or less monopolistic business units need offer no peculiar impediments to the organization of labor.

This fact becomes a consideration of fundamental importance in any speculation as to the prospects of trade unionism for the future. If, as is widely contended at present, industrial advancement is vitally related to the increasing concentration of business into large units, it is true that thereby the power of employers to resist the organization of labor will be enhanced; but it does not necessarily follow that this power will be exerted. Whether or not it will be exerted must depend to a large extent upon the unions themselves. If the management of these bodies is enlightened and is in consonance with the progress of the times, if arbitrary, irritating, and needless restrictions upon the freedom of the employer are avoided, if due regard is

accorded the possibilities of scientific advancement and adequate attention and study are bestowed upon the teachings of the most competent voices in the realm of economic thought,—in a word, if trade unionism is so conducted as to draw upon it the approval and the hearty endorsement of teachers, publicists, statesmen, and finally of that intangible but most effective potentiality, public opinion, it is entirely possible that the attitude of combinations of capital toward combinations of labor may undergo a gradual transformation from one of open hostility and suppression to one of laissez faire, and ultimately to one of outright approval.

These combinations of capital are by no means insusceptible to public opinion. Recently we have seen extensive advertising by the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad, before its dissolution, in defense of the management of that corporation. The American Telephone and Telegraph Company, in order to offset the proposals from various important sources for the government ownership of telephones and telegraphs, has likewise advertised extensively in newspapers and magazines, has issued pamphlets setting forth the relative advantages of private over government ownership, and has had its officials address various bodies along the same lines. The United States Steel Corporation also, in order to combat certain criticisms of its treatment of its laboring force, had an investigation of the labor conditions in the corporation conducted by a committee of stockholders in 1911, the report of which was distributed broadcast to stockholders and to others who might be interested. At a meeting of the stockholders of the corporation on April 20, 1914, the condition of the workers was the topic of discussion, and various workmen were brought up to testify as to their satisfaction with existing conditions. Even these great corporations feel that they must reckon with public opinion, and must justify the treatment accorded their laboring force. One need only call to mind the recent publicity campaigns of the railroads and of

the anthracite coal operators in opposition to the demands of their employees in order to understand the importance which such great employers of labor attach to a favorable public opinion in any contest with their workmen.

With the public mind in its present temper in regard to industrial combinations, with the policy of regulation of businesses concerned with a public interest become an established legal and political doctrine, it is important, if the combinations of capital are to escape unduly restrictive legislation, that they avoid antagonizing such an important section of public opinion as that embraced within the 2,700,000 trade unionists of the country. The trade unionists in the same manner must avoid policies of domineering interference or of monopolistic exclusiveness if they are to gain the approval of that controlling body of public opinion made up of neither members of labor organizations nor managers of great corporations.

We see, then, that as far as the nature of the business organization is concerned, the trust presents quite a different problem from that offered by the one-man shop or the home worker; that whereas the latter are ill adapted to the scheme of trade-union regulation, so that their existence undermines the very basis of trade unionism, the problem of the trust is due entirely to the favorable strategic position enjoyed by the employer under that form of business organization. A solution of the problem may be found in the building up through enlightened management on the part of the unions of a public opinion favorable to trade unionism.

*Employers' Associations.*—In view of the great obstacles which the existence of large combinations of capital places in the way of the organization of labor, it might be expected that the rise of employers' associations, where a number of employers are brought together in organizations generally formed for the purpose of fighting trade unions, would be looked upon by the latter with hostility. Indeed, numerous examples could be cited where such associations have dealt grievous blows to organized labor, and some of the strongest

employers' associations, like the National Founders' Association and the National Metal Trades Association, are avowedly hostile to the plans of trade unionism.

In the well organized employers' association there may exist all three of those factors affecting the organization of labor which we have found associated with the trust type of business. In the first place, the association, maintained by the contribution of a large number of employers, is able to give financial assistance at the point threatened by trade-union aggression, and may thus bolster up a comparatively small employer who would be too weak to resist alone. In the second place, the association may have facilities for breaking a strike comparable to those possessed by the trust. It may have the work of a member who is fighting a strike done in some of the other members' shops. Where this is not practicable, it may be able to supply the employer with strike breakers more readily than they could be obtained by him acting as an individual. The National Founders' Association keeps in its employ a regular body of so-called "contract molders" whom it can dispatch as strike breakers to points at which trouble arises. The National Metal Trades Association maintains bureaus at New York and Chicago by means of which it obtains strike breakers through advertisements, special inducements being offered the strike breakers in the way of bonuses, free transportation to the place of the strike, and a certificate of recommendation guaranteeing to them preference in employment by the members of the association. Finally, in the employers' association are to be found possibilities of discrimination against trade unionists or labor agitators similar to those existing in the trust. The National Metal Trades Association employs a corps of men known as "special contract operatives." They are usually members of the union, but act as secret agents of the association, and by working among the men in the shops are able to find out who are the union agitators or leaders and thus secure their discharge if this is deemed advisable. Moreover, most of the local branches of the association

maintain employment bureaus through which employers are urged to hire their men. The bureau may not ask the applicant for employment whether he is a member of a union, but his previous employers are asked concerning him; for example, whether he is a "disturber." Against such men discrimination may be practiced in giving work.[19]

In spite of this, however, the attitude of enlightened labor leaders is rather favorable to such associations. John Mitchell says: "The attitude of organized workingmen should not be, and as a rule is not, hostile to the organization of employers. . . . Workingmen in asserting their right to combine are obliged, by the logic of their own demands, to concede an equal right to employers. The associations of employers have resulted from the formation of unions of workmen, and each organization should be of benefit to the other. Harmony in the industrial world will be best obtained by the creation and strengthening of labor unions and employers' associations, and by the inculcation of a permanently friendly feeling between organized labor and organized capital."[20] On this same subject Mr. Gompers comments as follows: "In a recent lecture Dr. Lyman Abbott . . . permitted this balanced but blundering sentence to escape him: 'In industry the right of laborers to organize is denied by capitalists and the right of capitalists to organize is denied by laborers.' It seemed to us that this was the one salient expression in the doctor's whole discourse—and it is dead wrong. Nowadays, every branch of organized labor is only too happy when its employers get together."[21] The International Typographical Union found its relations with the American Newspaper Publishers' Association so satisfactory that at its convention in 1911 it actually passed a resolution providing that the executive council should formulate a plan whereby there might be

[19] For the above information in regard to the National Metal Trades Association the writer is indebted to a manuscript article on that subject by Professor George E. Barnett.

[20] J. Mitchell, Organized Labor, p. 192.

[21] American Federationist, August, 1910, p. 682.

created an association of book and job employers of the same nature as the above association.[22]

The reason for this attitude of organized labor is to be found (1) in the fact that an employers' association, although representing an equal amount of capital with the large business unit, which we have just considered, possesses decidedly less strategic strength, and (2) in the possibilities which the association offers for collective bargaining.

(1) In the trust type of business organization, management and profits are centralized. The policy of the corporation toward the organization of its employees is determined by a comparatively small board of directors or executive committee; its policy, once decided upon, can be carried out firmly and relentlessly without the necessity of argument or justification as to the expediency of its action. If trouble occurs in one of its plants, it can, as we have seen, concentrate its forces upon stamping out unionism in that plant; if necessary, it can shut the plant down altogether, and depend upon its other plants for the supply of its customers' demands, meanwhile keeping up its dividends through the profits of these plants. With the employers' association it is not so. In such associations are to be found employers varying, as the Webbs say, considerably in their resources and their opportunities for profit-making.

> Those making exceptional profits will not care obstinately to stand out against the men's demands, and so lose trade which they may never regain, when agreement with the trade union would still leave them a handsome surplus. To firms insufficiently supplied with capital, moreover, a long stoppage may easily be more disastrous than anything that the Trade Union asks for. In the private meetings of any employers' association during a strike, these two classes are always pressing for a settlement, and if they fail to persuade their more slow-going and highly-capitalized competitors to accept their view, they are apt at last to make peace on their own account, and so destroy any chance of the employers' successful resistance.[23]

It was in this way that the United Brewery Workmen overcame the opposition of the various brewers' pools which

[22] Proceedings, 1912, p. 101. Report of Executive Council.
[23] Industrial Democracy, p. 553.

were formed in many cities throughout the country in the great struggle of 1888. "One or the other brewer would consider it to his advantage to make peace with the union. The consumption of union beer was then used as a lever to get other brewery owners out of the Pool."[24] In 1909 the members of the Fur Felt Hat Manufacturers' Association resolved at their meeting, and bonded themselves to the amount of $25,000 each, to refuse to treat with the Hatters' Union; moreover, they discarded the union label. Although this action prevented a meeting between the representatives of the union and of the association, various agreements were formed with local branches of the Manufacturers' Association and with individual firms.[25]

It is true that in a very efficient employers' association these weaknesses may be to a large extent obviated. We have spoken of the systems employed by the National Founders' Association and the National Metal Trades Association for supplying the shop which has been struck with strike breakers, thereby enabling the employer to continue the operation of his plant; and mention has also been made of the means of preventing strikes by the facilitating of discrimination against labor agitators. Nevertheless, there is to be found among the shops of these two associations by no means the practically complete extermination of trade unionism which exists in some of the large corporations like the United States Steel Corporation, the American Tobacco Company, the National Biscuit Company, or the Western Union and Postal Telegraph companies. For five or six years prior to 1904 the Molders' Union had had an agreement with the National Founders' Association. In that year, however, the agreement broke down, and the policy of the association became one of hostility toward the union. In spite of this, according to an editorial in the Molders' Journal in 1906, agreements were signed that year by the union with many individual members of the associa-

[24] Schlüter, p. 167.
[25] Proceedings, United Hatters, 1911, pp. 42–54.

tion.[26] Since that time it is probable that, with the growth of the association, the number of such agreements has greatly decreased. However, it is still true that many union molders are employed in the shops of members of the association. Among the shops of the National Metal Trades Association "the number of written agreements made by members of the Association is certainly not great, but a careful reading of the strikes reported to the Association in the last few years indicates that in a considerable number of shops the unions exert a powerful influence in determining the conditions of work and it is altogether probable that in the shops of many members, union rules quite incompatible with the Declaration of Principles [of the Association] are enforced."[27]

It is clearly evident, therefore, that however hostile may be the attitude of an employers' association, as an association, toward the union, the attitude of individual employers in the association is likely to vary considerably. It may be that the habit of mind or experience of some employers has led them to look with less hostility on trade unions; or it may be that the majority of shops in a certain district do not belong to the association and are organized by the union, so that even a member of the association may find it desirable to remain on friendly terms with the union in order that the field for his labor supply may not be too narrowly restricted. Likewise, where organized labor can effectively apply the boycott it may be profitable for the employer to refrain from provoking the hostility of the union. In any case, a strike in a member's shop means a certain amount of worry and loss through interference with the regular routine of the shop. Against all such losses employers' associations make no pretensions to provide. A clause in the constitution of the National Metal Trades Association before 1904 led most of the members of the association to the belief that the association undertook to insure them

[26] Iron Molders' Journal, August, 1906, pp. 593–594; October, 1906, pp. 752–754.

[27] G. E. Barnett, National Metal Trades Association, MS.

absolutely against all losses through strikes. In 1904, however, this clause was changed, and the chairman of the committee explained that great numbers of claims had been coming in recently for such insurance, and that to satisfy them all would simply wreck the entire association.[28] Therefore, while employers may desire to have the protection of the association in cases of what they consider unreasonable demands on the part of the union, they may prefer to raise no opposition to the unionizing of their plant, or they may even prefer to submit to certain regulations of the union rather than be subjected to the irritation and loss accompanying a strike.

(2) Moreover, beyond this inherent weakness in employers' associations for fighting the unions, such associations possess also certain positive characteristics which make them actually favorable to the growth of trade unionism. In the first place, organization having been effected among the employers, they subject themselves to the charge of inconsistency if a right to combine similarly is altogether denied to their employees. Consequently, the opposition of employers' associations is generally declared to be, not against the principle of the organization of labor, but against the particular manifestation of organization which the union has assumed in the specific trade in question. The employer's desire for protection, however, having taken him so far as to lead him to subscribe to the general principle of organization and to submit to some extent to the authority of the association in the management of his business, the old conception of that business as his private property, to be managed—within legal limits, of course—absolutely according to his individual disposition, must undergo modification, so that in the course of time the regulations of the union may seem no more irksome than the stipulations of the association.

The result of this condition is to make the employers' association more favorably inclined to adopt the principle of

[28] Barnett, National Metal Trades Association, MS.

collective bargaining than is the individual employer. Moreover, within the association we may expect to find, as mentioned above, those two classes of the exceedingly prosperous or the financially embarrassed employer, whose interests lie in the direction of peace with the union and whose influence may confidently be expected to be thrown on the side of an agreement between the association and the union, so that their coemployers may be placed upon the same competitive level as they themselves, as far as regards cost of labor. At the same time, the averseness of any employer to granting the union's demands on account of the fear of competition is lessened because of the knowledge that the same regulation will apply to all his competitors. Consequently, it may well be said, "The tendency of the association of employers is to facilitate the entrance into agreements, which are an increasing factor in the industrial situation. These agreements are made annually in many of the trades, and are undoubtedly of advantage. They avoid controversies, and secure friendly and cordial relations between the employer and the employee."[29]

Numerous instances can be found of successful agreements between employers' associations and trade unions.

[29] Nineteenth Annual Report of Massachusetts State Board of Arbitration, January, 1905, p. 11. Mr. Gompers makes a similar statement: "The principal good reason why laborers like 'capitalists' to come together is that the latter organization usually leads to a trade agreement with the laborers. A trade agreement stands for industrial peace" (American Federationist, August, 1910, p. 682).

Attention should, however, be called to the fact that trade agreements are not possible with all associations of employers. Such associations may be divided into two classes: (1) trade associations, (2) general associations. The former are homogeneous bodies, confining their membership in each case to employers in one particular trade or industry. It is with these associations that the unions can form trade agreements. General associations, such as the American Anti-Boycott Association or various Citizens' Alliances, on the other hand, are heterogeneous and open their membership to employers in all trades. With them it is obvious that unions can form no trade agreements, so that, although they suffer under the disadvantages which have been described above as characteristic of employers' associations in any fight with the union, they are in no way of any benefit to the organization of labor unless perhaps in the very indirect way of acting as wholesome restraints upon the arbitrary exercise of power by the union. They are likely to arise with excesses in trade unionism.

Probably the most conspicuous example is that of the Molders with the Stove Founders' National Defense Association. This association was formed originally for the purpose of fighting the union. Efforts to put a stop to the hostilities which ensued led to the formation in 1891 of an agreement providing for conciliation. The agreement was successful not only in putting an end to hostilities but in adding to the membership of the union. At the time of the first conference between the association and the union in 1891 fully one half of the stove foundries were open or non-union shops. The conferences avoided the question of the union shop, and the foundrymen paid no attention to the unionizing of their foundries, which advanced steadily as the conferences began to bring results. "In the course of time they [the foundrymen] have actually come to lean to the other side and even to invite the national officers to organize their foundries. This change in attitude was induced by the knowledge of the discipline and faithful observance of agreements enforced by the officers of the union. A union shop was no longer a menace, because the stability which the manufacturer required was as fully guaranteed under union rules as it was under the foundrymen's personal control." By May, 1907, all but three or four of the foundries represented in the Defense Association had become union shops.[30]

Another example showing the possibilities of union growth under an agreement with an employers' association is furnished by the Ladies' Garment Workers. Before the strike of 1910—at the conclusion of which, in September, the protocol, or treaty of peace, was signed with the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Association of New York City—the membership of the cloak, suit, and skirt makers' unions of New York involved in the strike was about 6000.[31] By February, 1912, after the formation of

[30] Frey and Commons, Conciliation in the Stove Industry, pp. 346, 347.

[31] Conciliation, Arbitration and Sanitation in the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Industry in New York City, Bulletin No. 98, U. S. Bureau of Labor, p. 205.

the agreement with the association, the membership of the unions had increased to about 50,000, including practically all the workers in the trade in New York City.[32] Since then similar agreements have been formed with six other manufacturers' associations in the ladies' garment industry.[33] The membership of the union in 1913 was about 114,000.

As other examples of successful relations between employers' associations and trade unions there may be mentioned the conferences of the Flint Glass Workers and the Glass Bottle Blowers with employers' associations in the glass industry, the agreements of the United Garment Workers with a number of associations of manufacturers,[34] the agreement of the Printers with the American Newspaper Publishers' Association,[35] of the Longshoremen with the Lumber Carriers' Association on the Great Lakes, and of the United Mine Workers with various associations of employers in the bituminous districts.

It may be expected that from time to time trade unions will have to meet the hostility of employers' associations. This hostility may be due to the rapid growth and consequent radicalism of the union, and in this case the association may prove a wholesome restraining power. On the other hand, it may be due to the very inertia of the union, that is, to its failure to adapt itself to changed conditions in an industry. The hostility of both the National Founders' Association and the National Metal Trades Association in the beginning was due in large part to the opposition of the unions to the introduction of machines and the inauguration of new methods of management, such as bonus and efficiency systems. Time may be expected, however, to convince the union that it must bow to the inevitable and suit its regulations to the changed conditions.

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[32] Ibid., p. 213.

[33] Conciliation, Arbitration and Sanitation in the Dress and Waist Industry of New York City, Bulletin Whole No. 145, No. 5, U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, p. 7.

[34] Ibid., pp. 154–155.

[35] Barnett, The Printers, pp. 345–351.

The president of the National Founders' Association reported in 1912 that many proprietors of union shops had introduced molding machines and improved appliances and were operating them with little or no opposition from the union. This condition, he said, was in marked contrast to that which prevailed prior to 1906. Many a union shop, he said, was producing a satisfactory output on molding machines operated by handymen.[36] The experience of the union with a hostile association has evidently had its effect. Now that the union has modified its position so that even the association admits that a satisfactory output may be obtained under union regulations, the greatest obstacle in the way of the restoration of friendly relations between the two organizations is eliminated, and it is not altogether utopian to expect that the history of the Stove Founders' National Defense Association may be duplicated in the formation of an agreement between the union and the association.

[36] Proceedings, National Founders' Association, 1912, p. 17.

## CHAPTER VIII

### The Technical Nature of the Trade

In the two preceding chapters we have been concerned with the effects upon the organization of labor of certain types of business units or groupings of employers. We shall now consider the effects of certain conditions in what may be called the technical nature of the trade or industry. Under this heading will be discussed (1) the difficulties in organization brought about by the overlapping of trades, and (2) those arising from changes in industrial processes or methods.

*The Overlapping of Trades.*—In the absence of a single organization embracing all the workmen in every trade or industry within a definite territory, and under a system of organization such as that existing in this country, wherein the field is left open to a great number of unions, each claiming control over a particular group of workers, it is extremely desirable that these groups shall be clearly defined, easily distinguishable, and mutually exclusive. Not only is this important in order that all those performing any particular kind of work may be included in the regulations of the union as to the standard rate and other conditions for that work, but also in order that various unions, in their ardor for increasing the size and power of their organizations and for extending the opportunities of employment for their members, may not be tempted to trespass upon the domain claimed by a sister union. To be exact, however, "trespass," connoting, as it does, the idea of culpability, is too strong a word; for the crux of the whole difficulty which we are now about to consider lies in the fact that, of two contending unions, each may have equally weighty claims to control over the work in question.

Unfortunately for the welfare of trade unionism, the work proper to all occupations cannot be marked off so clearly as that of the barber or the locomotive engineer. Consider, for example, the work of the sheet metal worker. According to the constitution of the Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers' International Alliance, that union claims jurisdiction over the following work: "All metal roofing, the manufacturing, erection and finishing of metal cornices, metal skylights, metal furniture, metal lockers, hollow metal doors and trim, metal sash and frames, metal ceilings and sidings (both exterior and interior), all sheet metal work in connection with heating and ventilating, furnace and range work, metal jobbing, assortment work, coppersmithing, and all sheet metal work made of No. 10 gauge and lighter; providing, however, this gauge restriction shall not apply to coppersmiths in the working of copper, who shall have jurisdiction over copper of any and all gauges."[1] This long enumeration evidences the difficulty which has been experienced in making a succinct but inclusive classification of the work considered proper to the sheet metal worker. Moreover, these various kinds of work are of such a nature that in all directions they taper off almost indistinguishably into the work of men nominally the members of some other craft. That is to say, the boundary line marking off the work of the men of this organization from that of men of other organizations is in many cases of an extremely hazy, uncertain, and disputable nature.

Thus arises one of the most potent of all the influences militating against the better organization of the Sheet Metal Workers, namely, the so-called jurisdictional dispute. The history of the above organization is replete with examples of such disputes, now with the Stove Mounters in regard to sheet metal work upon stoves; now with the Structural Iron Workers in regard to the thickness of metal to be handled by each organization; now with the Boilermakers concerning the working of iron heavier than No. 16 gauge; now

[1] Constitution, 1911, art. vi, sec. 2.

with the Painters in regard to the setting of glass in metal sash; now with the Slate Roofers in regard to the laying of tin on the edge of slate roofs; now with the Steam Fitters because coppersmiths in railroad shops are doing pipe fitting; finally, and by far most important, with the Carpenters, principally in regard to the erection of metal trim.[2]

In each of these cases the work in dispute could be performed equally well by either of the contending parties, and by what particular craft it should be done is debatable. The settlement of the question, then, becomes a matter of amicable adjustment, of arbitral decree, or of industrial warfare. Thus far in the experience of trade unions in this country the first two of these methods have proved inadequate for the solution of the problem. Consequently, resort has been had to the crude and costly processes of the third method, and the determination of the controversy has turned upon which contestant possessed the greater strategical resources or was able to rally to its side the stronger support of other unions. The manner in which such controversies hinder the organization of labor has already been pointed out in Chapter IV, where the evils of jurisdictional disputes were considered.

These disputes due to difficulties in determining the demarcation of trades are especially frequent in the building industry, where trades are much subdivided and labor organizations correspondingly numerous. Of the nineteen or twenty building trades scarcely one has been without demarcation disputes at times, while in the case of some, like the Carpenters, the Bricklayers, the Plasterers, the Sheet Metal Workers, the Stone Cutters, and the Granite Cutters, these disputes have been constant.

*Changes in Technical Processes.*—Other things being equal, stability in the technical processes or methods of an industry is a condition favorable to the growth of labor organization, and the frequent introduction of new proc-

[2] See Reports of President O'Sullivan, Proceedings, 1909, in Journal for September, 1909, p. 346, and Proceedings, 1911, in Journal, September, 1911.

esses or new methods is an obstacle in the way of such growth. Here we are not concerned with any difficulties that may exist after the change in technical processes has once been completely accomplished and the new methods have been firmly installed, but with those difficulties which arise during the period of transition. In other words, these difficulties may be said to be due to the dynamic characteristics of our economic life. Two possibilities of danger to organization inhere in the introduction of new processes in an industry: (1) the opening up of new sources of conflict between one union and another in the way of demarcation disputes, (2) the opening up of new sources of friction between the union and the employer. Each of these difficulties will be considered.

(1) The traceableness of demarcation disputes to the overlapping of trades has just been described. But, difficult as is the matter of making a just decision as to which of two contending unions may rightly be entitled to work that is on the boundary line between two closely connected trades, it is altogether probable that, provided the question at issue itself remained the same, ultimately—whether through the triumph of right or of might—some practical determination of the matter would be reached, and the dangers of demarcation disputes eliminated for the future. The attainment of this very desirable state of affairs, however, is impeded by the fact that, with the introduction of new processes—new methods, new machinery, or new materials—the grounds for controversy are constantly shifting. Thus a recent writer, discussing demarcation disputes in the building trades, says: "So numerous are the disputes growing out of the introduction of new materials that it might well be maintained that if no more new materials were introduced into the construction of buildings the unions in the building trades would gradually reach an adjustment of their claims which would almost entirely eliminate demarcation disputes."[3]

[3] Whitney, p. 110.

Numerous examples of disputes due to changes in technical processes might be given. Suffice it to cite one or two instances illustrating the manner in which the dispute may arise. The introduction of the plaster block partition led to disputes in 1902 in Boston between the Bricklayers and the Operative Plasterers as to the right to install this new material. By one union the work was claimed as part of bricklaying, because it was a substitute for brick and tile, by the other union, as part of plastering, because plasterers' tools were used in preparing the bed and cross joints for the blocks.[4] The introduction of hollow tile and block arching for fireproofing likewise led the Bricklayers into disputes with laborers' organizations claiming jurisdiction over the same work.[5] The frequent disputes of the Sheet Metal Workers with various organizations have already been mentioned. In many of the cases the trouble was due to the introduction of some new material. Thus the increasing use of hollow metal doors and trim led to disputes with the Carpenters, and the use of metal furniture to disputes with the Structural Iron Workers.[6]

Not only the introduction of new materials, but changes in the form of the division of labor may also lead to demarcation disputes. The tendency of modern times is toward increasing specialization. Occupations which were formerly considered within the domain of a single trade have become each a separate trade. Whereas formerly the trade of masonry was regarded as including the cutting as well as the setting of stone, at present in nearly all sections of the country this work is divided into two trades. The result has been continual trouble between the Granite Cutters and the Stone Cutters on the one hand and the masons belonging to the Bricklayers and Masons on the other hand, because the latter persisted in disregarding the differentiation which had arisen between the work of stone cutting and that of stone setting. Sometimes, however, the parts

[4] Whitney, pp. 111–112.
[5] Ibid., p. 112.
[6] Ibid., p. 113.

are reversed, and the Masons engage in demarcation disputes with the Stone Cutters because the latter set stone as well as cut it.[7] Therefore, we may say of these demarcation disputes that, while the overlapping of trades provides the powder, as it were, for possible explosions, changes in industrial processes usually supply the spark by which the powder is ignited.

(2) In addition to the possibilities of danger to the organization of labor which the changing of technical processes or methods involves through the opening up of new sources of conflict between one union and another, there is also the danger arising from the opening up of new sources of friction between the union and the employer. The proximate if not the ultimate goal of trade unionism is the establishment of systems of collective bargaining. The successful working of such a system is promoted by its reduction as far as possible to a matter of routine, so that the questions which arise year after year at the conferences between employers and employees may all be more or less standardized, and in course of time both the union and the employer may come to understand and appreciate the attitude of one another on these matters. The introduction of new processes hinders this consummation. The question is then raised as to how the union shall deal with these new processes. A new policy must be decided upon with reference to the matter and this policy harmonized with the employer's plans. Thus it must be decided whether or not the union shall oppose the new process. If unopposed, shall the union maintain control over it, and to what extent, if any, shall the union profit by it? Shall the men receive all of the benefit resulting from economies in the new process; or shall they receive a part, and if so, what part; or shall all of the benefit go to the employer; or, where the new process results in the lessening of the skill required by the workmen, shall the latter submit to an actual reduction in wages?

[7] Whitney, p. 106.

Such questions constantly arise with changes in industrial processes. President Valentine of the Molders, speaking at the convention of 1907 of the development of molding machines, said:

> It is now a problem of pronounced difficulties. The value of the machine to the foundryman is largely determined by the amount of labor and skill it eliminates from the work of the molder. Some perform but one operation while others perform a number of operations. . . . The problem for us is to determine the best policy to be pursued in dealing with the machine. . . . It must be apparent to those who have given the subject intelligent consideration that it would be impossible to suggest a policy or specific legislation general in its application to all machines. Each type of machine might possibly be a problem unto itself and require different treatment from that which could properly be accorded its neighbor.[8]

In some cases the changes taking place in an industry may amount to a miniature "industrial revolution." Consider the foundry industry, for instance. In 1876 the editor of the Iron Molders' Journal was able to declare, "There is nothing to prevent the molders from controlling the trade thoroughly; there is no competition from machinery; there is no foreign competition, and there will be none."[9] The editor, however, proved himself a poor prophet. As an evidence of the extent to which machinery has been introduced, almost eliminating the necessity for skilled molders, the following report is given by the secretary of the National Founders' Association as typical of the reorganization of a foundry accomplished after a strike:

| | Before the strike | After the strike |
|---|---|---|
| Journeymen Floor Molders | 7 | 1 |
| Journeymen Bench Molders | 2 | 0 |
| Molders' Apprentices and Specialty Molders | 8 | 14 |
| Machine Operators | 13 | 15 |
| Coremakers, Journeymen | 17 | 4 |
| Unskilled Coremakers and Apprentices | 17 | 29 |
| | 64 | 63 |

"In other words, the proprietor at the conclusion of his strike had so classified his work that he employed 19 less

[8] Proceedings, 1907, p. 9.
[9] Iron Molders' Journal, October, 1876, p. 98.

skilled mechanics, having replaced them with the same number of unskilled men."[10]

In trades like those of the molder and the coremaker, where a considerable degree of skill has been acquired by the workman after a long period of apprenticeship, so that he has come to look upon himself as having almost a vested right in his skill, a readjustment like that pictured above is no simple matter. And just as the whole regulative scheme of industry was thrown out of gear by the so-called industrial revolution at the end of the eighteenth century, in like manner the smooth and harmonious development of trade unionism as part of the regulative system of modern industry is retarded by these minor industrial revolutions which occur every now and then in particular industries. Whether or not a union is to pass safely through the storm must depend upon its adaptability to the changed conditions.

It does not happen in every case, of course, that the attempt to solve these problems leads to open rupture between the union and the employer. In spite of such difficulties the Molders have maintained amicable relations with the Stove Founders' National Defense Association for many years, although even in this case it is stated that a satisfactory agreement was reached only as late as June, 1914, after the matter had been very prominent in the conferences of the two associations for seven years and had caused serious concern and apprehension to the representatives of both associations.[11] In the glass bottle industry, where problems of momentous importance to the men were presented by the introduction of the semi-automatic and the automatic jar and bottle blowing machines, adjustments have so far been carried out apparently without any decided detriment to the organization of the Glass Bottle Blowers' Association. But here also, as in the case of the stove molders, there was in existence a well established system of collective bargaining, so that there was a better spirit of mutual confidence and understanding than there would have been if the attempt

[10] Proceedings, National Founders' Association, 1912, pp. 22, 23.
[11] International Molders' Journal, July, 1914, pp. 565–566.

were just being made to establish such a system. In the printing industry the introduction of the linotype took place without any detriment to the organization of the Typographical Union. Doubtless other similar cases might be cited. But although it may be thus demonstrated that in various particular instances changes in industrial processes have occurred and suitable adjustments in trade-union policy have been accomplished without any harmful effect upon the organization of labor in the industry affected, it would be difficult to establish that such changes are ever of actual benefit to the organization of labor.

On the other hand, instances of positive detriment can be pointed out. In 1899 the Molders entered into the so-called New York Agreement with the National Founders' Association. It was hoped that this agreement would bring about the same conditions of successful collective bargaining in the machinery branch of molding as then existed in the stove branch under the agreement of 1891 with the Stove Founders' National Defense Association. Agreements were entered into with the National Founders' Association up to 1904. These agreements covered principally the question of wages. As to a number of matters, however, no satisfactory settlement could be reached, among them being piece work, apprentices, and control over machines and appliances—the latter, it will be observed, a question due to a change in processes. Finally, the manufacturers in their "Outline of Policy" asked for a general or national form of agreement, providing among other things for leaving the method of operating molding machines optional with the foundrymen. The union would not agree to these propositions, and in November, 1904, the New York agreement was abrogated by the association. It is difficult to estimate just what importance should be attached to the irritation caused the employers by the policy of the union toward the machines. It may be said, however, that in 1913 the president of the National Founders' Association, in commenting upon the success achieved by that association in its applica-

tion of the "Outline of Policy," spoke of the results of this policy in regard to machines as second in importance only to those in regard to the removal of the limitation of apprentices.[12] We may judge of the loss caused the union by the failure of this agreement by recalling the previously described experience of the Molders with the Stove Founders' National Defense Association and the growth in membership resulting therefrom.

In the stone-cutting trade is to be found an example of the evil effects which may result from the changes in processes brought about by the introduction of machinery. Beginning with 1895, the introduction of the machine for planing soft stone was fairly rapid. Before this time the cutting of soft stone had been strictly a hand operation, performed by a skilled workman who had spent several years in learning his trade. The change taking place in the trade, apparently dispensing with part of the heretofore requisite skill and opening up possibilities of a considerable displacement of labor, necessitated the formulation of some new policy by the union to cope with the changed situation. The policy actually pursued was one of hostility to the machine. Restrictions were placed on the shipment of planer-cut stone from one branch of the union to another, and the introduction of the planer in branches where it did not already exist was opposed. Rules were also adopted restricting the number of hours a planer might be operated, and requiring that planermen should be stone cutters and that a certain number of hand cutters should be employed for each planer. The latter rule, a local one, was adopted by a number of branches but never by the national union.

The fruits of this policy were not only difficulties in the enforcement of the rules on account of serious divisions in interest among the branches, but also the stirring up of a powerful opposition on the part of the associated employers, resulting in numerous strikes and in the formation of dual unions by the employers. The National Cut Stone Con-

[12] Proceedings, November, 1913, p. 10, Report of President.

tractors' Association was formed at Chicago in 1904. One of its purposes was to protect members against the Stone Cutters and particularly against restrictions on machinery. As an aid in fighting the established union, the association inspired the formation of a dual national union; and in May, 1905, delegates from dual local unions in eight or nine large cities met in Pittsburgh and organized the National Stone Cutters' Society. The purpose of the new national union was to organize independent local unions whenever branches of the old union refused to comply with the rules of the contractors regarding the machines. Not until quite recently has an understanding between the two rival unions been concluded.[13] Meanwhile the organization of labor in the industry was suffering from all the evils that have been set forth as incident to jurisdictional disputes.

Another example of the failure of a union to modify its policy in adequate consonance with the development of technical processes is found in the steel industry. Conditions in this industry about 1890 have been summarized as follows:

> The general policy of the Amalgamated Association [of Iron and Steel Workers] . . . had from the beginning been very exclusive, so that the union embraced only the more highly skilled men in a comparatively limited part of the rapidly developing steel industry, and the organization of lodges in the steel mills was in large part merely incidental to the development and strengthening of the organization in what may be called the iron branch of the industry. At no time in the history of the Amalgamated Association was any attempt made to work out a logical scheme for dealing with the highly complex situation in the steel mills, nor was even a separate branch organized for unifying the many lodges which developed in connection with the large steel plants. The scales for the steel plants were left almost entirely to the individual local lodge, and as a result of this policy the widest discrepancies existed between the scales for different steel plants. . . .
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> The industry and its mechanical equipment were developing at a rate that has hardly been equaled in any other industry, and it was impossible to make the constant readjustments in wages and general working conditions which the new manufacturing methods demanded without considerable opposition from the members of the union.

[13] For a full account of the experiences of the stone cutters with the machine see G. E. Barnett, "The Stonecutters' Union and the Stone-Planer," in Journal of Political Economy, vol. xxiv, pp. 417–444.

The constant friction which arose in readjusting working conditions proved a source of great irritation to the manufacturers, and there is no question that they were impatient at all times to be rid of the obstacles which the union placed in the way of their making changes in the working conditions of their plants in any way and at any time they saw fit.

This was a period, moreover, of the greatest rivalry between the steel manufacturers. Every effort was bent to the establishment of new records of production, and both men and machines were driven to the utmost in order to produce new records which would startle the manufacturing world. The Amalgamated Association had definitely attempted to carry over into the rapidly developing steel branch of the industry many of the restrictions on output which had prevented overspeeding in the iron branch of the industry. Any sort of restriction on output was naturally distasteful to steel manufacturers, and the forms of restriction used by the unions were in many cases illogical and not applicable to the new methods of production which had been developed. The profits of the industry during this period were very large, and while this situation led the manufacturers to accept almost any conditions under pressure, on the other hand, the results which many of the manufacturers were getting served only to increase the envy and emulation of the other manufacturers. As a result of the working of these various forces and motives, the steel manufacturers, particularly in Allegheny County, constantly attempted to rid themselves of the presence of organized labor in their mills. Most of these attempts did not result in serious trouble, because usually the lodges were very strong and the attempts to break their power were abandoned before any considerable dispute had been caused.[14]

In 1892, however, occurred the famous Homestead strike and other sympathetic strikes lasting for five months, in which the union was completely beaten and the workmen were compelled to return under individual contracts as non-union men. The organization was so weakened that it was unable to hold its membership even in the iron mills of the Pittsburgh district, which had formerly been thoroughly organized. The membership fell from 20,975 in 1892 to 10,000 in 1894, and it remained at this figure practically unchanged till 1900.[15]

In recent years efforts toward increasing the productivity of industry have been directed along another line besides the introduction of machinery—a development which has again brought on conflicts between employers and organized labor.

[14] Report on Conditions of Employment in the Iron and Steel Industry in the United States, vol. iii, pp. 113, 114.

[15] Report on Conditions of Employment in the Iron and Steel Industry in the United States, vol. iii, p. 116.

Close observation and careful timing of the elementary movements required for the performance of various operations of workmen have led certain managers to the conviction that under the traditional methods employed a great waste of energy has been involved, and that by detailed study, careful planning, and close coordination, standardized methods and specialized skill may be perfected which will reduce waste to a minimum, conserve the energies of the workman, and add enormously to his possibilities of production. As an incentive to the employee to make use of the approved methods and put forth his best efforts, it is part of the plan that certain premiums be offered for all work accomplished beyond a specified amount. This in brief is the so-called system of scientific management.

Concerning the merits of this system it is not our place here to inquire. But we should take notice of the fact that the new system, disturbing as it does the established methods of work, and running counter to some of the most deep-rooted prejudices of workmen—for example, those in regard to timing by shop watch and rewarding by premium—is looked upon, to say the least, with undisguised suspicion by organized labor. It is thought that its claims for increased productivity are but the visions of theorists; and it is feared that increased effort and nervous strain may lead to the physical deterioration of the workman, that somewhere in the system a "snake" is concealed, and that it may be a cunningly devised scheme of employers to introduce sweat-shop methods or through increased specialization to lessen the independence of the employee, thereby threatening the very existence of the union itself. Moreover, there is the fear that, if the system is successful in increasing the output of the individual workman, part of the working force may be dispensed with, and some workmen, temporarily at least, thrown out of employment. Consequently the first impulse of organized labor has been one of opposition to the new system. This is illustrated in the case of the Machinists. President O'Connell in his report to the convention in 1899

urged that some definite policy be adopted as to the position of the union in the future regarding the introduction of piece-work and premium plans. He thought that a wise policy would be to face the inevitable, select the best system, and control it, and that thereby a large number of manufacturers whom the union was constantly fighting might be rapidly unionized. A special committee to which this part of the report was referred made substantially similar recommendations and proposed a very stringent plan for the regulation of the premium system. The report, however, was almost unanimously rejected. The president advised that some arrangement be adopted to regulate the system, but the storm was on, he says, and the plan was swept aside.[16]

The hostile attitude of trade unions toward the bonus system is best evidenced by the attitude of the Locomotive Engineers. This union, "the least chargeable of all unions with restrictive policies, required the Sante Fe Railroad officials to abandon it after a few months' trial. At the conference when this decision was reached, the heads of the organization avowed their willingness to cooperate, but said, 'so far as this prize system that you have at the present time, we are all afraid of it. We are afraid of the principle behind it.'"[17]

This matter of the proper limits of the authority of employer and union in regard to the introduction of new processes or new methods is one concerning which it is very difficult to lay down any general principles for guidance. On the one hand, the employer, who assumes the risk of the enterprise, feels that all policies tending to increase the efficiency of his business should be within his own control. The union, on the other hand, fearing that the untried innovation may lead to the displacement of some of its members or the weakening of its power as an organization, feels that it too has a vital interest in the determination of the new

[16] Engineering Magazine, June, 1900, pp. 375, 376.

[17] J. R. Commons, "Labor's Attitude toward Efficiency," in American Economic Review, vol. i, pp. 468, 469.

policy. Thus arises a conflict of interests. The employer, anxious to place his enterprise upon the most efficient basis—nay, perhaps by the force of competition compelled to do so—is apt to look upon any hampering policies of the union as reactionary, unreasonable, or even pernicious.[18] Therefore he embraces whatever opportunities arise for casting off this galling yoke of trade unionism; lockouts and strikes ensue; and the strength of the organization is sapped.

How may the destructive conflicts incident to changes in industrial processes or methods be avoided? At the outset it should be noted that they may be absent or may be minimized in importance where the union is either exceptionally strong or extremely weak. In the one case the union may force its policy upon the employers, as occurred in the opposition of the Locomotive Engineers to the introduction of scientific management.[19] In the other case the union may be powerless to offer any resistance to the policy of the employer, as is true in the steel trust at present. Regardless of the desirability of either of these conditions, however, it may be said that the normal state of trade unionism is in conformity with neither of them, but is represented rather by a mean between the two, where the union, although a power to be reckoned with, possesses no such control as did the Locomotive Engineers. Under these circumstances, in order to avoid strife in regard to the introduction of new processes or methods, it is necessary that there should be (1) an assurance to the employer that he is not denied through union regulation the use of the new process which his non-union competitor may avail himself of unhampered; (2) the presence of a spirit of mutual confidence and conciliation on the part of employers and employees.

[18] The attitude of Mr. Frederick W. Taylor, the originator of "scientific management," and that of men of similar training and experience is that the employee has no right to control or participate in the management of the establishment (C. B. Thompson, "The Literature of Scientific Management," in Quarterly Journal of Economics, vol. xxviii, p. 552).

[19] It is a question how long such opposition could be effective if it were out of harmony with sound economic principles.

If the first condition is present, the employer himself assumes responsibility for a delay in the introduction of the new process. If the second condition is present, neither employer nor employee will be dogmatic as to the possibilities of the new process or arbitrary concerning the terms of its introduction. The realization of this desideratum may be accomplished by the formation of a trade agreement. The mere formulation of an agreement providing for conciliation or arbitration is not, however, in itself a guarantee for the attainment of a spirit of mutual trust. This must come about through the continued manifestation of an attitude of conciliation and a practice of good faith by both association and union. It is advantageous for the development of mutual conciliation and confidence that the number of points at issue should be reduced to the smallest possible number; and it is, as we have seen, partly for just this reason that changes in industrial processes constitute an obstacle to the organization of labor. We have seen, for instance, that this was one of the reasons why the agreement of the Molders with the National Founders' Association failed after an existence of only four or five years. On the other hand, in the stove industry, where the agreement with the Stove Founders' National Defense Association had been in existence for a number of years before the question as to the introduction of machines became acute, a spirit of mutual confidence and conciliation had developed, so that it was possible to maintain friendly and harmonious relations in spite of the fact that the subject has been very prominent in the conferences of the two associations for many years and has caused serious concern and apprehension to the representatives of both organizations.

We see, therefore, that it is possible to bring about peacefully the introduction of new processes without the domination of either the employer or the union, by reaching an adjustment embracing to some extent the contentions of both parties. But while it is well enough for the union to aim for the trade agreement as an advanced step in its efforts to regulate labor conditions, the question arises as to what

policy should be pursued in the absence of such an agreement, due perhaps to the lack of an employers' association or to the weakness of the union. The determination of this policy depends upon a host of empirical considerations.

For each separate change in industrial processes a different policy on the part of the union might be required. In one case, as shown by Professor Barnett, it may be wise for the union to insist that its own skilled members be placed in charge of work on a new machine, as was done by the Typographical Union when the linotype was introduced.[20] In another case, however, where the operation of the new machine can be performed satisfactorily by unskilled labor, such a policy might lead to conflicts with employers, as it did in the Molders' attempts to control the molding machine. Again, the Webbs contend that it is, generally speaking, bad policy for skilled workmen to attempt to compete with a machine by lowering their rate, yet under certain circumstances even such a step appears to be justifiable, at least temporarily. Thus the Glass Bottle Blowers, in order to provide some relief for a large portion of their members who were unemployed on account of the introduction of the automatic bottle and jar machine, lowered their rate and thereby opened up the way for the employment of a great number of their idle members. The step was taken not without misgiving, and could not be pursued continuously; but, considering the special circumstances in that trade at the time—the high rate of pay received by skilled glass bottle blowers and the fact that it was utterly impossible for all the men to obtain employment at that rate—the procedure would seem to have been justifiable. In this case it is true that the union was aided in carrying out its policy by a long-standing agreement with the associated employers.[21] The case is cited, however, as indicative of the

[20] G. E. Barnett, "The Introduction of the Linotype," in J. R. Commons, Trade Unionism and Labor Problems, pp. 271–273.

[21] For information in regard to the introduction of machinery in the glass bottle industry the writer is indebted to manuscript articles of Professor Barnett on the semi-automatic and automatic bottle and jar blowing machinery.

danger in adopting any dogmatic policy to be vigorously pursued under all circumstances.

Where the union is not very strong and is endeavoring to gain a foothold in an industry, the wisest policy for the union may be for it to allow the employer a free hand in the introduction of new processes or new methods, to devote its efforts to the regulation of wages and hours, and to proceed slowly even in these matters. This has been the policy of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union in its efforts to build up an organization in that industry. In 1902 President Tobin explained the policy of the union as follows: "Since the adoption of our present form of arbitration, coupled by the present Constitution, your executive officers have found it to be decidedly to the advantage of the Organization to concede wholly to the employer the right to hire and discharge, and also to determine under what system work should be done and by conceding this very fruitful source of trouble peculiar to our old form of organization, we have avoided many serious disagreements and our members have not suffered materially in individual cases, while the membership as a whole has been decidedly benefited and solidified."[22] Although conceding to the employer the right to determine the system under which work should be done, the union still reserved the right to negotiate with the employer as to compensation and the way in which the work should be divided among the employees; and in the event of failure to agree, the employer was obliged under the agreements formed to submit the case to arbitration.

The Boot and Shoe Workers, under this policy of devoting their energies primarily to the work of organization, with the expectation of gradually bettering conditions as the union increases in power, have built up a large membership—34,300 in 1913—and have attained considerable success in maintaining harmonious relations with the employers. In the report of the Massachusetts State Board of Conciliation and Arbitration in 1913 it is stated: "The

[22] Proceedings, 1902, p. 7.

Brockton Shoe Manufacturers' Association and the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, like the springs of an arch meeting from either side, are joined in a trade agreement which makes of their industry a solid organization cemented by good will."[23]

In this age of science and invention, when change and development in technical processes are the order of the day, it is evident that the problems of trade-union policy connected with such changes are extremely numerous. The attitude of organized labor is probably well expressed in the words of Mr. John Golden, president of the Textile Workers. "It is natural," he says, "that the wage earner should look with suspicion upon any change, or any proposed change in the ordinary conditions under which he works, and it is proper that he should do so, in my judgment."[24] In the early days of trade unionism this suspicion took a more positive form in the attempts of workmen to prevent the introduction of machinery. Now, however, generally speaking, organized labor has learned by experience the utter futility of such efforts, and, except in some isolated instances, no fight is made against the machine as such. Even so, its introduction is not always accomplished without a clash of arms. Thus Mr. Golden, while declaring that during his twenty-five years of connection with trade unionism, both in this country and in England, there had never been a single strike in the textile industry against an improved machine, also asserted, "But we did strike against the conditions that were imposed when the new inventions came into fashion."[25]

Such strikes, however, although detrimental to the growth of organization, may be justifiable, so that the standing of trade unionism before the bar of public opinion is not harmed. On the other hand, if the attitude of the union is simply one of opposition to the introduction of some

[23] Annual Report, Massachusetts State Board of Conciliation and Arbitration, for year ending December, 1913, p. 9.
[24] J. Golden, "The Attitude of Organized Labor," in Journal of Accountancy, vol. xii, p. 189.
[25] Ibid., pp. 191–192.

new process, it may appear to a considerable section of the public that trade unionism is an obstacle in the way of progress, and that its extension should, to say the least, receive no encouragement. It is incumbent, therefore, upon the officers directing the policies of trade unions to examine with the utmost candor, painstaking, and thoroughness any proposal for the promotion of efficiency in production before allowing the impression to get abroad that trade unionism is opposed to that proposal, as is at present true in regard to the question of scientific management. This matter becomes of large importance when we take into consideration the great value of public opinion as a factor in promoting organization, especially among those classes of workers otherwise difficult to organize. A discussion of this factor is presented in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER IX

### General Economic Conditions and Public Opinion

The growth of trade unionism as a whole in any country is very largely affected by two important factors in the general economic conditions of that country. These are (1) the state of business activity, and (2) the degree to which population has been concentrated in cities of a fair size. Another factor which exerts a powerful influence upon the growth of trade unionism as a whole is the state of public opinion in regard to that movement. In this chapter the effect of each of these factors upon organization will be considered.

(1) It is a circumstance frequently commented upon by trade-union leaders that organization has in their particular unions either been retarded in its progress or actually thrown back by a period of industrial depression. As we have seen, President Perkins of the Cigar Makers, in attempting to prove the value of benefit systems, speaks of the fact that, before the establishment of its system of substantial benefits, that union had suffered heavily during the period of stagnation in the seventies, the membership falling from 5800 in 1869 to 1016 in 1877.[1] In another place he states that the value of the benefit system of the Cigar Makers is shown by the fact that during the long industrial depression after 1893 the membership of that union was maintained intact, while the membership of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners sank from 60,000 to 17,000. Other unions with low dues, he says, had a similar experience.[2]

[1] Letter of G. W. Perkins, in The Official Journal [Hod Carriers and Building Laborers], January–February, 1908.

[2] Letter in The Official Journal [Hod Carriers and Building Laborers], December, 1904, pp. 13–14.

In order to perceive clearly the effect of general business conditions upon the growth of trade unionism as a whole, we should study the statistics of trade-union membership from year to year and observe their course through periods

TABLE V

COMPARISON OF GROWTH OF NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF UNIONS IN NEW YORK STATE WITH GENERAL CONDITION OF BUSINESS, 1894–1912

| Year | Condition of business[3] | Membership[4] | | Number of unions[4] | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total | Per cent increase (+) or decrease (−) | Total | Increase |
| 1894 | Deep depression | 157,197 | .... | 860 | ... |
| 1895 | Brief revival | 180,231 | 14.7+ | 927 | 67 |
| 1896 | Return of depression | 170,296 | 5.5− | 962 | 35 |
| 1897 | Improvement in second half year | 168,454 | 1.1− | 1009 | 47 |
| 1898 | Rising prosperity | 171,067 | 1.6+ | 1087 | 78 |
| 1899 | High tide of prosperity | 209,020 | 22.2+ | 1320 | 233 |
| 1900 | Slight pause in activity | 245,381 | 17.4+ | 1635 | 315 |
| 1901 | Prosperity in general business | 276,141 | 12.5+ | 1871 | 236 |
| 1902 | Prosperity continued | 329,101 | 19.2+ | 2229 | 358 |
| 1903 | Financial liquidation, business still active | 395,598 | 20.2+ | 2583 | 354 |
| 1904 | Mild industrial depression | 391,676 | 1.0− | 2504 | *79 |
| 1905 | Rapid gain in prosperity | 383,236 | 2.2− | 2402 | *102 |
| 1906 | High tide of prosperity | 398,494 | 4.0+ | 2420 | 18 |
| 1907 | Crisis and severe panic in October to December | 436,792 | 9.6+ | 2497 | 77 |
| 1908 | Deep depression in trade and industry | 372,459 | 14.7− | 2444 | *53 |
| 1909 | Recuperation marked in second half year | 372,729 | 0.1+ | 2368 | *76 |
| 1910 | Return of depression in second half year | 481,924 | 29.3+ | 2457 | 89 |
| 1911 | Mild depression | 504,314 | 4.6+ | 2498 | 41 |
| 1912 | ..... | 526,672 | 4.4+ | 2469 | *29 |

* Decrease.

of prosperity and of depression. We have no official statistics for trade-union membership as a whole throughout the United States for any number of years, but the New

[3] W. C. Mitchell, Business Cycles, p. 88.

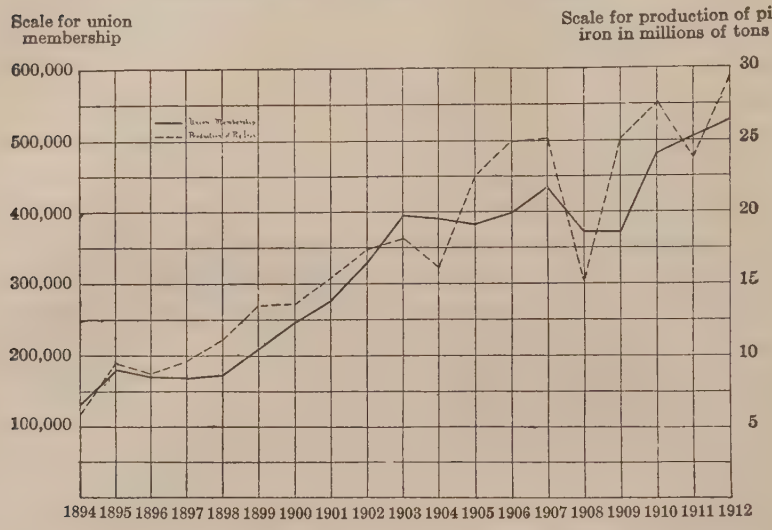
[4] Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, N. Y. State Department of Labor, 1912, p. xl.

York Bureau of Labor Statistics provides this information for New York State since 1894. A study of the fluctuations in the membership of trade unions in this State discloses the manner in which membership is affected by general business conditions.

In Table V is shown the growth of trade unionism in New York, both in membership and in the number of unions, from 1894 to 1912. For each year there is also presented a description of the state of business during the year as given by Professor Mitchell in his book on "Business Cycles." Attention should be called to the fact, however, that the statistics of union membership are for years ending September 30, except for 1894, 1895, and 1896, when they are for years ending July 1, July 1, and October 31, respectively; while the state of business is reported for the calendar year. Where the change from a condition of prosperity to depression, or vice versa, is gradual, this discrepancy does not greatly matter; but where there is a rapid change from one year to another, this fact must be borne in mind if the statistics are to be properly interpreted. A graphical representation of the growth of union membership compared with the state of business is given in the following chart, in which the annual production of pig iron in the United States is taken as a measure of business activity.

From this graph and Table V it is evident that the great gains in organization have been during periods of prosperity and business activity, while a decline in membership or a halting of the rate of growth has accompanied periods of depression and business inactivity. In 1894, during a period of extreme depression, membership was low. During a brief revival in 1895 it rose somewhat, but fell again with the subsequent depression. Beginning with 1898, the country entered upon a period of great prosperity, which continued until 1903. During these years the growth of union membership was steady and rapid, there being an increase from approximately 170,000 at the former date to over 395,000 at the latter. The mild depression in 1904

GROWTH OF UNION MEMBERSHIP IN NEW YORK STATE AND ANNUAL PRODUCTION OF PIG IRON IN U. S. 1894–1912




brought a slight decline in membership, which continued in 1905 although a revival in business began this year. During the next two years, with the continuance of prosperity, membership again advanced. In the last three months of 1907 there occurred a crisis and severe panic. This, however, was too late to affect the statistics of trade-union membership, which are, it will be remembered, for the year ending September 30. But in the next year, during a deep depression in trade and industry, membership suffered a sharp decline, falling from over 436,000 in 1907 to something over 372,000 in 1908, a decline of 14.7 per cent. For the next year membership remained stationary; but the marked recuperation in business in the second half of the year brought with it the greatest gain in membership made during any year here considered, there being a growth from approximately 482,000 to 504,000, an increase of 29.3 per cent. The depression occurring in the second half of 1910 was evidently not sufficient to cause a decline in membership;

and with the recovery of business in 1912, membership advanced steadily, reaching in that year its highest point, 526,672.

It will be noticed that for each of the eighteen changes recorded, the curve for membership is synchronous with the curve for the production of pig iron, with the exception of the three years 1897, 1905, and 1911, when the curves move in opposite directions, and the year 1909, when the curve for membership shows no rise in spite of a remarkable gain in the production of pig iron. These failures in synchronism, however, do not indicate that union membership is not affected by the state of business, but are doubtless to be attributed to the fact that union membership is affected less rapidly than is the production of pig iron by changes in the degree of business activity. For example, in 1905 union membership did not respond immediately to the gain in prosperity, but showed a marked increase with the continued business activity of the two following years. In 1911 the depression was probably too short to affect seriously the growth in membership.

The above showing is nothing more than we should expect; for there are several important reasons why trade-union membership is decidedly influenced by the general state of business. In the first place, during a period of depression when there is much unemployment, it becomes difficult or impossible for many members to keep up their dues. Many lapses occur for this reason. Secondly, not only is it harder to hold old members, but it is more difficult to obtain new ones. When many people out of employment are waiting to take the workman's place, he is less inclined to run the risk of losing his job by antagonizing his employer through trade-union activities than at times when jobs are plentiful. Finally, the union occupies a weaker strategical position in times of depression than in times of prosperity. When business is active, employers are, generally speaking, reaping their harvest. Hence an interruption to their business is extremely undesirable, and often

they may prefer to yield to the demands of their workmen rather than undergo the losses incident to a shut-down. Moreover, even in case the employer is inclined to fight, he will find it more difficult to recruit his force with competent non-union workmen because there is a smaller labor supply of the unemployed available than in times of depression. But in times of depression not only is the employer, because of the large supply of unemployed workmen, better able to make a fight against the union, but he is also less disinclined to do so, since with business running low, a strike of his men may provide a convenient excuse for shutting down his plant.

However, this statement as to the comparative strategical positions of unions during prosperity and depression might not go unchallenged, and therefore needs more extended consideration. Dr. Ira Cross, studying the statistics of strikes in the United States from 1881 to 1905 and writing in 1908, came to the conclusion that "the percentage of successful strikes decreases during periods of business prosperity and increases during 'hard times.'"[5] One might be inclined to think from this statement that, as a matter of fact, unions are not only far from being in a position of strategical inferiority during periods of depression, but are actually more advantageously situated for strike purposes then than during periods of prosperity. Arguing a priori, however, this conclusion would seem to be unsound for the reasons above indicated. Furthermore, it is submitted that a closer study of the strike statistics for the years mentioned will not justify such an inference because such a study does not confirm the conclusion of Dr. Cross that the percentage of successful strikes decreases during periods of business prosperity and increases during hard times, and because, instead of considering the percentage of successful strikes, we ought to consider the absolute number.

The conclusions of Dr. Cross are drawn from graphs which he plotted showing the courses of successful and un-

[5] I. Cross, "Strike Statistics," in Publications of the American Statistical Association, vol. xi, p. 194.

successful strikes from 1881 to 1905. Nothing, however, is shown on the graphs or included in the text to indicate the course of business activity during this period. Therefore it is probable that a somewhat rough approximation was made of it, and conclusions were drawn accordingly. Now, it was my desire to determine just what is the relationship between variations in business activity from year to year and variations in the percentage of successful strikes. In order to do this, the annual production of pig iron was taken as a good index of business activity, and a comparison of the variations therein with the variations in the percentage of successful strikes was made by Karl Pearson's method of correlation. The figures for the annual production of pig iron and the percentage of successful strikes were not compared directly, inasmuch as the trend in the former statistics would have given misleading results. This difficulty was overcome by employing a method used by Professor Fisher in his "Purchasing Power of Money," where he says, "The proper method of applying a coefficient of correlation to successive data appears to be to calculate the coefficient, not for the raw figures, but for their successive year-to-year ratios."[6] Therefore, instead of comparing the annual production of pig iron directly with the percentage of successful strikes each year, we tabulate and compare the ratios of each year's production of pig iron to the preceding year's production and of each year's successful strikes to the preceding year's successful strikes. These figures are given in Appendix II. The results of the calculation show a correlation of twenty-two per cent (or $.22 \pm .13$, where .13 is the probable error). This is only a low coefficient of correlation, and consequently it cannot be said that the investigation proves that the percentage of successful strikes varies directly with the degree of business activity. Nevertheless, the fact that we do obtain a positive coefficient as high as the above is very strong evidence that the percentage of successful strikes does not vary inversely

[6] I. Fisher, "The Purchasing Power of Money," pp. 294–295.

with the degree of business activity, and proves that the conclusion of Dr. Cross is not justified by the showing of the statistics.

If by the same method we compare the production of pig iron, not with the percentages of successful strikes, but with their absolute number, we obtain a correlation of thirty-nine per cent (or $.39 \pm .12$, where .12 is the probable error). Here again it cannot be said that there is any decided correlation. Nevertheless, there appears to be a clear tendency for the number of successful strikes to rise and fall with the rise and fall of business activity. It seems that there is a tendency for the total number of strikes to vary directly with the degree of business activity; therefore, although only a slightly larger per cent of the strikes may be successful in times of prosperity than in times of depression, nevertheless, because of the larger total, the absolute number of successful strikes has a tendency to increase considerably in times of prosperity. Doubtless with the rising tide of prosperity many reckless strikes are indulged in by ill-prepared workers, and this is the reason why the percentage of successful ones is not higher. But with the greater success of strikes on the whole, trade unionism is better able to enforce its demands and carry out its policies; consequently its appeal to the workingman is all the stronger.

(2) An important obstacle to organization in the United States is the dispersion of a large portion of the population. The establishment of a local union at any place requires the presence of a certain number of workmen within reasonable physical proximity to that place so that they may without too great inconvenience or expense attend the meetings of the union and thus transact its business. No definite rule can be laid down as to just how large a number is necessary in all cases for the establishment of a local union. Obviously one workman would not be sufficient, and two or three would hardly feel the necessity for a union in order to bring about concerted action. For one reason or another, however, practically all national unions have made some

regulation in regard to the number of members necessary for the formation of local unions. With the Horseshoers, the Printing Pressmen, and several other unions the number is five; with the Western Federation of Miners it is twenty. Between these two extremes there are various requirements —seven, ten, eleven, fifteen. Consequently, in those towns where there are not the requisite number of workmen in any particular trade it is impossible to form a local union; and even in those places where the number of workmen is just above the limit it is difficult in many cases to keep a local union going. Professor Barnett, writing of the experience of the International Typographical Union, says: "Even in a prosperous year a considerable number of the small unions surrender their charters, and many members of the union contend that the expenditure of money in organizing and reorganizing unions in small cities is ill advised."[7] The wide dispersion of printers in the small towns of the country has made it difficult for the union to obtain complete control over the trade; and what is true of the printers is true of various other trades like the bakers, the bricklayers, the carpenters, the plumbers, the painters, and others.

The effect of the concentration of population upon the organization of a trade should be disclosed by a comparison of the extent of organization in some particular trade in the various States of this country with the degree to which workers at that trade are concentrated in cities in those States. For this purpose the bricklayers, the masons, and the plasterers provided a good subject of study in several ways. In the first place, the membership in 1910 of the unions having jurisdiction over these trades could be obtained for the individual States; likewise the total number of such workmen could be obtained for each State, and for cities of 25,000 or over in each State, from the Census of Occupations for 1910. It was thus possible to get good statistical data for comparison. In the second place, the

[7] Barnett, The Printers, pp. 263–264.

unions in these trades have been in existence for a long time, and the trades are on the whole comparatively well organized, so that we may expect those places most advantageously situated to have had time to effect organization. Consequently, if the concentration of workmen in cities does influence in an important manner the growth of organization, this fact ought to be clearly disclosed by a comparison of the extent of organization in these trades with the degree to which the workmen are concentrated in cities.

The table of Appendix III shows for each State the percentage of bricklayers, masons, and plasterers who are organized, together with the percentage of those living in cities of 25,000 inhabitants or more. The relation between the two sets of figures was studied by means of Pearson's method of correlation. In this instance, however, the two sets of percentages were compared directly. As a result there was shown to be a correlation of fifty-six per cent (or $.56 \pm .06$, where .06 is the probable error). This figure, fifty-six per cent, is a fairly high coefficient of correlation, and we may conclude, therefore, that the growth of organization is affected in a very marked manner by the extent to which workmen are concentrated.[8]

As the population of the country increases, this handicap to organization will decline in importance, since the tendency of population is toward concentration in the cities. While in 1890 the urban population[9] of the country was only 36.1 per cent of the total (63,000,000), in 1910 it had increased to 46.3 of the total (92,000,000). The increase was greatest in the number of those living in the very large cities. The percentage of those in cities of 2500 to 5000

[8] Apparently after concentration has reached a certain point, further concentration of bricklayers, masons, and plasterers does not add to the facility with which they can be organized. Thus in cities of 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants the percentage of organized workmen in these trades was 59; in cities of 100,000 inhabitants or over, except New York and Chicago, it was 54; and in New York and Chicago it was 56.

[9] Urban population includes those living in cities of 2500 inhabitants or more.

inhabitants increased only from 4.3 in 1890 to 4.5 in 1910, while the percentage of those in cities of 1,000,000 or more increased from 5.8 in 1890 to 9.2 in 1910. The percentages of those in the cities of intermediate size also showed a fairly large increase.[10]

*Public Opinion.*—No one would question that most of us are profoundly influenced in our actions by the desire to stand well in the estimation of our fellowmen. The knowledge that public approval will follow a certain line of action will usually constitute a powerful incentive in that direction. Consequently the progress of trade unionism, depending as it does upon the alacrity with which workmen will affiliate themselves with the movement and upon the intensity with which employers oppose or endorse it, must be in a large degree affected by the attitude of public opinion.

Francis A. Walker, speaking of the struggle of the workingman to better his condition, writes as follows:

> Now I ask, can it be doubtful that the respect and sympathy of the community must strengthen the wages class in this unceasing struggle; must give weight and force to all their reasonable demands; must make them more resolute and patient in resisting encroachment; must add to the confidence with which each individual laborer will rely on the good faith of those who are joined with him in his cause, and make it harder for any weak or doubtful comrade to succumb?
>
> And, on the other hand, will not the consciousness that the whole community sympathize with the efforts of labor to advance its condition, by all fair means, inevitably weaken the resistance of the employing class to claims which can be conceded, diminish the confidence with which each employer looks to his fellows to hold out to the end, and make it easier for the less resolute to retire from the contest, and grant, amid general applause, what has been demanded?[11]

The power of public opinion in connection with industrial relations is well illustrated by the way in which it has been utilized as a means of bringing about the speedy termination of strikes. The Canadian Industrial Disputes Act of 1907 is based upon the theory that the quick settlement of a dis-

[10] Abstract of the Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, p. 59.

[11] F. A. Walker, Political Economy, American Science Series, Advanced Course, p. 270.

pute may be promoted by the pressure of public opinion. The act provides machinery whereby in the case of public utility concerns the contentions of both parties to labor disputes must be investigated and made public before a strike or lockout is allowed. In explaining the working of this act, its author, Mr. W. L. Mackenzie King, writes: "This restraining influence of public opinion we have found in Canada a very powerful aid to industrial peace; in the last analysis, it is a most powerful element in settling all conflicts between capital and labor."[12] The effectiveness of this influence is shown by the fact that in August, 1913, there had been since the passage of the act one hundred and forty-five applications for boards of investigation. Eighteen of these cases were settled after application for the board but before appointment. Investigation was made in one hundred and twenty-seven cases, and, of these, strikes resulted in only eighteen.[13]

In the course of time the influence of public opinion will doubtless make itself felt in any dispute. Its action is quickest, however, in those cases where the concern of the public is more immediate and its convenience is more directly interfered with, that is, in the so-called public utilities industries. Here a long tying-up of operations is intolerable; and, if the mere feeling of responsibility for the public welfare on the part of the contending parties is not sufficient to bring about a quick termination of the dispute, it is likely that there will be some form of governmental interference, such as the investigations provided for in the Canadian Industrial Disputes Act, the mediation and arbitration provided for in the Erdman Act and in the Newlands Act, or direct intervention, such as occurred in the anthracite coal strike in 1902. As Mr. King said, the influence of public opinion under such circumstances is generally sufficient to bring about a speedy settlement of the dispute.

It should be noted, however, that public opinion operates

[12] W. L. M. King, "How Canada Prevents Strikes," in The World's Work, August, 1913, p. 441.
[13] Ibid., p. 438.

upon the union as well as upon the employer in bringing about the settlement of a dispute. Therefore, if that opinion is not in accord with the demands of the union, it would act as a detriment to the success of the union and consequently would be a hindrance rather than a help to organization. If the union is fighting simply for recognition, that is, for the right of having its committee deal with the employer for purposes of collective bargaining, it is probable that it would have the sympathy of the public, and that a fulfillment of its demands could be obtained. An example of this is found in the case of the Commercial Telegraphers. Since its great strike in 1907 this organization has had no standing with the two large telegraph companies in this country. No dealings are conducted by the companies with the union, and it is claimed by the union that the companies discharge employees upon learning of their connection with it. In the latter part of 1910 and the early part of 1911 a similar situation developed in the Great Northwestern Telegraph System in Canada. Upon the request of the union that schedule negotiations be commenced, the company began warfare upon the union by dismissing members. Finally attempts at negotiation were broken off, and an application was made to the Dominion Government for a Board of Conciliation and Investigation. The company made protest, but the union was able to convince the Department of Labor that the board should be granted. Hearings were held, and the result was a substantial increase in wages and the establishment of a set of rules.[14] In this case, then, public opinion as represented in the decision of the board was able to obtain substantial recognition for the union. On the other hand, it is extremely doubtful whether public opinion at the present time would support a union in a demand for a closed shop. The decision of the anthracite coal strike commission in 1902 in favor of the open shop has become classic authority for all the opponents of the closed shop.

[14] Commercial Telegraphers' Journal, June, 1912, p. 225, Report of President Konenkamp to the sixth convention, 1912.

It is probable that a similar decision would be given today.[15] If the closed shop is considered essential to the welfare or existence of the union, and if the acceding to a demand for it is prevented by a hostile public opinion, organized labor is then under the necessity of convincing the public that the closed shop is indispensable to its own welfare and compatible with justice toward others.

It is impossible to measure with accuracy the progress of so subtle and intangible a thing as public opinion. There is reason to believe, however, that within the last generation there has been a decided development in it favorable to trade unionism. Speaking of conditions in 1884, Mr. Joseph R. Buchanan says: "Please to remember that at the time of which I am writing, labor had few friends outside of its own ranks. The press was either antagonistic or indifferent. With a few exceptions the pulpit took no interest in the labor movement except to lecture it and abuse it, and the exceptions soon lost their charges or found their churches unpopular with those able to pay the minister's salary."[16] Writing at about the same time, Mr. Richard J. Hinton declared that in the United States the whole trade-union movement had "hardly reached the stage of toleration."[17] Consider, in contrast to Mr. Buchanan's assertion, the statement of Mr. Gompers in 1912 that during the "Labor Forward Movement," held that year in Minneapolis and St. Paul, free school buildings, churches, and municipal halls were utilized for union meetings, and that on one Sunday evening twenty-two pulpits were occupied by representative labor men.[18]

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[15] The decisions of the boards under the Canadian Industrial Disputes Act have nearly always been favorable to a recognition of the union. The closed shop, however, has never been favored, but in all cases where the question has arisen the decision has provided for the open shop. For this information the writer is indebted to Dr. Noble Stockett of the Economic Seminary of Johns Hopkins University, who made a detailed study of arbitration awards.

[16] Buchanan, p. 133.

[17] R. J. Hinton, "American Labor Organizations," in North American Review, vol. cxl, p. 49.

[18] American Federationist, October, 1912, p. 828.

Dr. Hourwich has pointed out that the progress of public opinion in regard to trade unionism has reversed the grounds upon which immigration is opposed. "The change of public sentiment from 1894, when the 'ignorant foreign workmen' were accused of organizing labor unions, to 1910, when the ignorant foreigners were accused of keeping away from labor unions, is symptomatic of the progress of organized labor during the intervening period. In 1894, when the 'ignorant foreigners' composed mainly the races of 'the old immigration,' trade unionism was still weak; after eighteen years of 'undesirable immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe,' organized labor has gained in numbers and won public recognition."[19]

The growing favor with which public opinion is regarding trade unionism is noticed and feared by hostile employers. In 1913 the secretary of the National Founders' Association declared that some systematic campaign would have to be undertaken by employers to counteract the union propaganda. As evidences of trade-union influence he cited the minimum wage and eight hour legislation, the various proposed wage commissions, and the recent exemption of labor unions from the operation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law. He thought that unions needed public assistance to secure these things and that the public seemed to be overwhelmingly in favor of the union propaganda.[20] On April 26, 1912, Mr. Emery, counsel of the National Association of Manufacturers, in view of the rapid increase of members of Congress holding union cards and the increasing political influence of labor,[21] wrote to Mr. Kirby, the president of the Association, "The time is at hand when the sixteenth amendment will provide for the possession of a union card by the President."[22]

[19] Hourwich, p. 333.
[20] Proceedings, 1913, pp. 23–27.
[21] In 1906 there were six representatives in Congress who held union cards. By 1914 the number had increased to seventeen representatives and one senator (P. G. Wright, p. 252, note).
[22] Ibid., p. 252.

This increasing favorableness of public opinion is a consequence of the waning faith in the doctrine of individualism, and is a part of the growing sentiment in favor of social legislation, a sentiment which makes possible a powerful plea to the electorate on a program of "social justice." It is also true that the very growth of trade unionism is in part responsible for the approving attitude of public opinion. Every advance in organization has broadened the foundation for further advances. It is possible to conceive of a state of affairs in which membership in a union would be looked upon as a normal status for every workman and where public opinion would even insist upon the formation of associations of the workers for facility in the regulation of trade conditions. Professor Ashley accounts for the growth of gilds during the Middle Ages partly by reason of the strong public opinion in favor of protecting purchasers against fraudulent or defective workmanship and the insistence of the municipal authorities that there should be an adequate supervision of every craft in order to detect and punish false work. "Accordingly we find group after group of workmen admonished by the municipal authorities to choose from among themselves persons who should be responsible for the work and behavior of their fellows."[23] In the course of the history of trade unionism public opinion has come to approve not only the right of the workmen to combine but also the recognition of the union as an agency for collective bargaining. From the standpoint of promoting the growth and stability of organization an enormous advance would be made if public opinion should take the next step and place the seal of its approval upon the device of the closed shop. Doubtless such a condition will not be reached until some provision has been made for governmental regulation and supervision of labor unions in order to prevent policies of monopolistic exclusiveness or an unconscionable interference with the public welfare and convenience.

[23] W. J. Ashley, The Economic Organization of England, pp. 31–32.

## CONCLUSION

From the foregoing analysis it is evident that the organizability of labor is affected by a great complexity of factors. In the case of any particular trade or class of workers, one of these factors or a combination of them will practically always be sufficient to account for whatever strength or weakness in organization may exist. We are desirous, however, of reaching some conclusion as to the possibilities of organization in the future. For this purpose we should consider to what extent the factors which we have discussed are likely to be operative. Are those favorable to organization likely to increase in importance, and those unfavorable to diminish, or vice versa?

Difficulties in organization on account of the management of the union will without doubt tend to grow less. Time and experience may confidently be expected to bring to the top the most capable leaders, to evolve that type of organization which is best fitted to survive, and to lessen those defects in the conduct of the union which have hindered organization, while correspondingly strengthening those which have fostered it.

Considering next those difficulties associated with the form of business organization, it may be noted that, under modern conditions of large-scale production, the small shop is likely to decrease in importance. The future of the trust is uncertain. If the policy of dissolution is continued, the difficulties in organizing labor will be lessened. On the other hand, if it becomes clearly evident that the trust is the most efficient form of business organization, the possibilities of hindering trade-union growth will be increased; but, as has been pointed out, these possibilities may never be fully realized because of the controlling influence of public opinion. As for employers' associations, it was seen

that, so far as these are of the homogeneous variety—that is, confined to employers in one industry or trade—they tend to promote organization, inasmuch as they usually lead to a trade agreement; while, so far as they are of the heterogeneous variety—such as citizens' alliances, composed of employers in many trades and industries—they are likely to provide a valuable corrective for trade-union excesses.

Other difficulties in organization which we considered were those associated with the technical nature of the trade and arising from changes in industrial processes. We have no reason to think that there is going to be any diminution in industrial progress, but it is altogether probable that the detrimental effect of these changes upon organization will become less. The consummation of trade agreements with employers and the continued practice of collective bargaining will doubtless diminish the discord between employers and employees arising from such changes. Likewise, federation and amalgamation among related unions, together with the growth of greater skill in management, should tend to lessen the acrimony and disruptiveness of jurisdictional conflicts between rival unions.

It has been shown that periods of industrial depression exert a destructive influence upon the organization of labor. Under modern methods of production such times of depression will continue to occur in the future. But, with the completion of reforms in our financial system, there is reason to believe that the intensity and duration of depressions will be diminished and the organization of labor correspondingly advanced. Similarly, the dispersion of a certain proportion of workmen through rural districts and in small towns will continue to make their organization extremely difficult, if not quite impossible. Nevertheless, with the increasing concentration of population in cities, this impediment should become one of constantly lessening importance.

Public opinion, we have seen, is a very potent influence in organization, and in recent years its tendency has been

favorable to labor unions. There seems to be no fundamental reason for expecting a reversal of this tendency at an early date, although salutary temporary reactions may result from the excesses of domineering unionism.

Some of the serious difficulties in organizing arise out of the personal characteristics of certain classes of workers, namely, unskilled, female, immigrant, and negro workers. We shall summarize the prospects of organizing these classes of workers considered in the inverse order from that given above. It would be utopian to look for the solution of the problem of organizing the negro worker in the South through the elimination of racial prejudice. Yet the experience of some unions leads us to believe that racial prejudice is more and more likely to yield to economic necessity, when the disorganizing effects of the former are clearly felt. It was seen that whether recent immigrants are more or less difficult to organize than are native unskilled workers is a controverted question, to which no clear-cut answer can be given. But, whatever the difficulties which may be associated with the recent immigration, they are likely to diminish in importance when the long continued agitation for the restriction of immigration shows results, as seems probable at an early date; or it may be that the immigration problem will solve itself without the aid of legislation through the depletion of Europe's population by the great war. In the case of female and unskilled workers—the latter class including most of the workers in the other three classes mentioned above—the conclusion was reached that the main problem was that of holding such workers in the union, and that the only expedient which gave much promise union, and that the only expedient which gave much promise of solving this problem was the closed shop, either in the

In view, however, of the employers' opposition to this device and the well-known strategic inferiority of these workers in industrial conflicts, what prospects are there for the attainment of closed-shop conditions among them? In the first place, it is obvious that the working out of this

result will be facilitated by the increasingly favorable influence of the other factors which have just been considered. Especially important should be the attitude which public opinion assumes toward the closed shop, as well as toward the boycott and the union label. Of more direct significance than these factors, however, is the growing spirit of cooperation among labor unions, the formation of federations, amalgamations, and industrial unions, the decided tendency toward which has been pointed out by various recent writers.[1] Wherever the unskilled workers are included in such alliances with the skilled, the former reap the benefit of whatever superior strategic strength may be possessed by the latter; and, if the alliance takes the form of an industrial union, such as the United Mine Workers, the unskilled obtain the use of the higher managerial ability of the skilled.

It is true that the lowest type of unskilled laborers have not been included in many of these cooperative arrangements, but several influences are at work to cause more and more attention to be paid to them. In the first place, the self-interest of the more skilled workers may dictate this policy because of the increasing subdivision of labor within industries. To quote one of the writers just cited, "As division of labor becomes more minute, as the old method of apprenticeship fails, and as the groups of skilled and semi-skilled are being recruited in an increasing number of instances by the promotion of the common laborers required for the many odd jobs existing in every industrial establishment, the other trades are manifesting a growing tendency to admit such potentially dangerous competitors to their unions."[2]

Moreover, the unskilled workers have a clear right to insist upon an alliance with the skilled wherever dependence is placed by the latter upon the union label as a method of

[1] Whitney, pp. 169–173; T. W. Glocker, "Amalgamation of Related Trades in Unions," in American Economic Review, vol. v, pp. 554–575; F. T. Carlton, "The Changing American Federation of Labor," in The Survey, November 21, 1914, pp. 192–193.

[2] Glocker, Amalgamation of Related Trades in Unions, pp. 574–575.

effecting organization; for the former may with justice maintain that no product on which only the skilled work is performed by union labor can properly be stamped "union made." Likewise, the unskilled workers have sound grounds for demanding alliance with the skilled in any boycotting campaign for effecting organization. Where the skilled workers in an industry have succeeded in strengthening their organization through the use of the boycott, those workers would be untrue to the oft avowed principle of the brotherhood of labor if they denied the use of the same weapon to the unskilled workers, similarly seeking to forward organization. Where the several groups of workers in an industry are not allied in their organization, we might have the anomalous situation of an employer considered fair to organized labor by one group, which is asking its fellow unionists to patronize that employer; and, on the other hand, considered unfair by another group, which is demanding that organized labor boycott the same employer. Such situations have arisen. Therefore, considering the boycott and the union label purely from the point of view of trade unionism, it is apparent that, if justice and efficiency are to be completely realized in their use, some form of cooperation between skilled and unskilled workmen must be provided.

Finally the closer alliance between skilled and unskilled labor is likely to be promoted by the growth of socialism and the propaganda of the Industrial Workers of the World. The sympathies of the socialists seem to be clearly in favor of the industrial form of organization; and, if the socialists continue to grow in the future as they have in the past, this factor should be of increasing importance. The Industrial Workers of the World direct their principal indictment against the old-line labor unions upon the ground that the latter have signally failed to organize the unskilled workers, the very ones whose condition most needs amelioration. Undoubtedly the propaganda of this organization, to which the older unions are thoroughly opposed, has stirred up the latter to greater activity in behalf of the unskilled work-

ers. Such an influence was apparent, for example, in the decided impetus to the organizing efforts of the American Federation of Labor among the textile workers, after the great strike at Lawrence in 1912 under the auspices of the Industrial Workers of the World.

This summing up of the factors affecting organization leads to the conclusion that, on the whole, those influences favorable to organization are likely to increase in importance in the future, and the unfavorable influences seem likely to decline. This does not necessarily mean that there will be a constantly augmenting accession to the ranks of trade unionism each year, since organizing efforts may be said to obey a law of diminishing returns. The first in the ranks of the unions are those whom surrounding conditions make most susceptible to organization. After a time, however, it becomes necessary to bring in those who are less favorably circumstanced in that respect. For example, after the skilled workers, and those in the large cities, and those employed by the more friendly or weaker employers, have been organized, the far more difficult task remains of organizing the unskilled laborers, and those in small towns, and those employed by the more hostile and powerful employers. At any given time the latter classes would naturally be the more difficult to organize. It is possible that, in the future, changed conditions may cause an even more rapid organization of these less favorably situated workers than that of the more favorably situated in the past. The better management of the existing unions, their greater financial strength, their stronger cooperation, their more effective use of the sympathetic strike, the boycott, the union label, and the closed shop, and the progress of public opinion toward collectivism, may all help to bring about such a result. But, even if the action of the above forces does not extend so far, it is clear that the possibility of organizing those less favorably situated classes is greater today than it was yesterday, and is likely to be greater tomorrow than it is today.

How far trade unionism will go in providing an ultimate

solution of some of our economic problems is an open question, concerning which there is a wide divergence of opinion, and the answer to which is beyond the purposes of this study. Many, however, place much hope in the collective action of labor as one method of mitigating the evils of unrestrained individualism, or as an important factor in bringing about better social conditions and a healthier economic life. For the accomplishment of these ends, as was pointed out in the beginning of this study, the limits of trade-union activity must depend primarily upon the organizability of labor. It can now be seen that these limits are far from having been reached as yet, so that the full possibilities of trade unionism as part of the regulative scheme of modern industrial life still remain to be tested.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I

### Comparison of Proportion of Foreign-born White Coal Operatives with Extent of Organization by Districts

| States | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Average membership in union for year 1909[1] | Corrected membership: 3.8% deducted for workmen not peculiar to industry[2] | Total coal operatives, 1910[3] | Foreign born white operatives, 1910[4] | Per cent foreign born white operatives | Per cent organized |
| Alabama | 597 | 584 | 20,778 | 1,381 | 6.6 | 2.8 |
| Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas | 12,111 | 11,651 | 14,768 | 6,832 | 46.2 | 79.0 |
| Colorado, New Mexico | 1,710 | 1,645 | 14,766 | 9,941 | 67.3 | 11.1 |
| Illinois | 60,554 | 58,253 | 58,738 | 28,424 | 48.4 | 99.2 |
| Indiana | 15,986 | 15,379 | 19,184 | 4,183 | 21.8 | 80.2 |
| Iowa | 14,690 | 14,132 | 13,990 | 5,460 | 39.0 | 100.0 |
| Kansas, Missouri | 8,508 | 8,185 | 18,350 | 7,264 | 39.6 | 44.6 |
| Tennessee, Kentucky | 5,592 | 5,380 | 29,404 | 925 | 3.2 | 18.3 |
| Maryland | 48 | 46 | 5,490 | 936 | 17.0 | 0.8 |
| Michigan | 2,964 | 2,851 | 2,823 | 1,447 | 51.3 | 100.0 |
| Montana, Wyoming | 9,061 | 8,717 | 10,266 | 7,950 | 77.4 | 84.9 |
| Ohio | 33,572 | 32,296 | 40,387 | 14,141 | 35.0 | 79.9 |
| (Bituminous) Pennsylvania | 57,960 | 80,738 | 291,746 | 195,798 | 67.1 | 27.6 |
| (Anthracite) Pennsylvania | 25,967 | | | | | |
| Utah | .... | .... | 2,318 | 1,784 | 77.0 | 0.0 |
| Virginia | .... | .... | 7,291 | 1,310 | 17.9 | 0.0 |
| Washington | 3,009 | 2,895 | 6,359 | 5,133 | 80.7 | 45.5 |
| West Virginia | 1,696 | 1,632 | 54,884 | 16,485 | 30.0 | 29.7 |

[1] Proceedings, United Mine Workers, 1910, p. 117, Report of Secretary.

[2] A deduction of 3.8 per cent was made from the reported membership of the union in each district in order that the membership statistics might embrace approximately the same classes as the statistics for total coal operatives. The latter include only employees peculiar to the industry, such as miners, blasters, etc.; whereas the reported membership statistics embrace other workers around the mines not peculiar to the industry, such as carpenters and engineers. According to the statistics for the entire country, this latter group constituted 3.8 per cent of the total of the two groups (Thirteenth Census, 1910, vol. iv, Occupation Statistics, p. 304).

[3] Occupation Statistics, 1910, pp. 434–534.

[4] Ibid.

## APPENDIX II

### Comparison of Success of Strikes with Annual Production of Pig Iron, 1881–1905

| Year | Production of pig iron | | Establishments in which strike succeeded | | Percentage of establishments in which strike succeeded | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total production in tens of thousands of long tons[1] | Successive year to year ratios | Total number[2] | Successive year to year ratios | Per cent[3] | Successive year to year ratios |
| 1881 | 414 | .... | 1798 | .... | 61.37 | .... |
| 1882 | 462 | 111.6 | 1128 | 62.8 | 53.59 | 87.3 |
| 1883 | 460 | 99.6 | 1605 | 142.3 | 58.17 | 108.6 |
| 1884 | 410 | 89.1 | 1219 | 75.9 | 51.50 | 88.5 |
| 1885 | 405 | 98.8 | 1206 | 98.9 | 52.80 | 102.5 |
| 1886 | 568 | 140.2 | 3468 | 287.5 | 34.51 | 65.3 |
| 1887 | 642 | 113.0 | 3005 | 86.7 | 45.64 | 132.2 |
| 1888 | 649 | 101.1 | 1830 | 60.9 | 52.22 | 114.5 |
| 1889 | 760 | 117.1 | 1760 | 96.2 | 46.49 | 89.1 |
| 1890 | 920 | 121.0 | 4966 | 282.2 | 52.65 | 113.3 |
| 1891 | 828 | 90.0 | 3075 | 61.9 | 37.88 | 71.9 |
| 1892 | 916 | 110.6 | 2177 | 70.8 | 39.31 | 103.7 |
| 1893 | 713 | 77.8 | 2318 | 106.5 | 50.86 | 129.5 |
| 1894 | 666 | 93.4 | 3122 | 134.6 | 38.09 | 74.8 |
| 1895 | 945 | 141.9 | 3850 | 123.3 | 55.24 | 144.9 |
| 1896 | 862 | 91.2 | 3233 | 84.0 | 59.19 | 107.2 |
| 1897 | 965 | 111.9 | 4866 | 150.5 | 57.31 | 96.8 |
| 1898 | 1177 | 122.0 | 2446 | 50.3 | 64.21 | 112.0 |
| 1899 | 1362 | 115.7 | 8284 | 338.7 | 73.24 | 114.0 |
| 1900 | 1379 | 101.2 | 4291 | 51.8 | 46.43 | 63.4 |
| 1901 | 1588 | 115.2 | 5323 | 124.0 | 48.77 | 105.2 |
| 1902 | 1782 | 112.2 | 6739 | 126.6 | 47.31 | 96.9 |
| 1903 | 1801 | 101.0 | 8281 | 122.9 | 40.87 | 86.5 |
| 1904 | 1650 | 91.6 | 3601 | 43.5 | 35.28 | 86.3 |
| 1905 | 2299 | 139.3 | 3333 | 92.6 | 40.17 | 113.8 |

[1] Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1912, p. 774.

[2] Twenty-first Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1906, p. 80. The above figures were calculated from the figures given in the Report.

[3] Ibid. These figures are the ones given in the Report.

## APPENDIX III

### Comparison of Extent of Organization of Bricklayers, Masons, and Plasterers with Concentration of these Workmen in Cities of 25,000 or More by States in 1910

| States | Bricklayers, masons and plasterers | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total in State[1] | In cities of 25,000 or more | | Union membership in State | |
| | | Number[2] | Per cent | Number[3] | Per cent |
| Alabama | 2,123 | 991 | 46.7 | 483 | 22.7 |
| Arizona | 455 | .... | 0.0 | 78 | 17.1 |
| Arkansas | 1,089 | 202 | 18.5 | 330 | 30.3 |
| California | 5,575 | 3,576 | 64.1 | 2,543 | 45.6 |
| Colorado | 2,144 | 1,215 | 56.7 | 922 | 43.0 |
| Connecticut | 3,423 | 1,894 | 55.3 | 1,685 | 49.2 |
| Delaware | 458 | 288 | 62.9 | 133 | 29.0 |
| District of Columbia | 1,571 | 1,571 | 100.0 | 988 | 62.9 |
| Florida | 1,111 | 387 | 34.8 | 421 | 37.9 |
| Georgia | 3,349 | 1,308 | 39.1 | 566 | 16.9 |
| Idaho | 710 | .... | 0.0 | 143 | 20.1 |
| Illinois | 15,830 | 10,389 | 65.6 | 9,207 | 58.2 |
| Indiana | 5,854 | 1,437 | 24.6 | 2,174 | 37.1 |
| Iowa | 5,106 | 1,321 | 25.9 | 832 | 16.3 |
| Kansas | 4,631 | 965 | 20.8 | 803 | 17.3 |
| Kentucky | 2,898 | 1,171 | 40.4 | 655 | 22.6 |
| Louisiana | 1,939 | 1,294 | 66.7 | 358 | 18.5 |
| Maine | 1,696 | 259 | 15.3 | 684 | 40.3 |
| Maryland | 3,110 | 1,505 | 48.4 | 1,075 | 34.6 |
| Massachusetts | 9,191 | 6,349 | 69.1 | 5,201 | 56.6 |
| Michigan | 6,880 | 3,057 | 44.4 | 1,977 | 28.7 |
| Minnesota | 5,605 | 2,819 | 50.3 | 1,606 | 28.6 |
| Mississippi | 917 | .... | 0.0 | 113 | 12.3 |
| Missouri | 7,719 | 4,744 | 61.5 | 2,935 | 38.0 |
| Montana | 785 | 89 | 11.3 | 397 | 50.6 |
| Nebraska | 2,787 | 864 | 31.0 | 520 | 18.6 |
| Nevada | 111 | .... | 0.0 | 71 | 63.9 |
| New Hampshire | 1,005 | 252 | 25.1 | 195 | 19.4 |
| New Jersey | 10,329 | 5,545 | 53.7 | 5,113 | 49.5 |
| New Mexico | 414 | .... | 0.0 | 41 | 9.9 |
| New York | 35,710 | 27,918 | 78.2 | 16,289 | 45.6 |
| North Carolina | 2,328 | 235 | 10.1 | 70 | 3.0 |
| North Dakota | 862 | .... | 0.0 | 86 | 9.9 |
| Ohio | 13,253 | 6,710 | 50.6 | 4,712 | 35.5 |
| Oklahoma | 2,995 | 840 | 28.0 | 1,050 | 35.0 |
| Oregon | 1,611 | 947 | 58.8 | 519 | 32.2 |
| Pennsylvania | 23,305 | 11,280 | 48.4 | 7,706 | 33.0 |
| Rhode Island | 1,641 | 1,131 | 68.9 | 763 | 46.5 |
| South Carolina | 1,727 | 313 | 18.1 | 164 | 9.5 |
| South Dakota | 1,090 | .... | 0.0 | 80 | 7.3 |
| Tennessee | 2,967 | 1,314 | 44.3 | 581 | 19.6 |
| Texas | 3,396 | 1,392 | 40.9 | 1,605 | 47.2 |
| Utah | 1,231 | 602 | 48.9 | 416 | 33.8 |

## APPENDIX III (CON.)

| States | Bricklayers, masons and plasterers | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total in State[1] | In cities of 25,000 or more | | Union membership in State | |
| | | Number[2] | Per cent | Number[3] | Per cent |
| Vermont | 643 | .... | 0.0 | 172 | 26.7 |
| Virginia | 3,614 | 1,094 | 30.3 | 472 | 13.1 |
| Washington | 3,134 | 1,969 | 62.8 | 1,005 | 32.1 |
| West Virginia | 2,067 | 252 | 12.2 | 518 | 25.1 |
| Wisconsin | 6,314 | 1,849 | 29.3 | 1,554 | 24.6 |
| Wyoming | 360 | .... | 0.0 | 74 | 20.6 |

[1] Thirteenth Census, 1910, Statistics of Occupations.

[2] Ibid. The total bricklayers, masons, and plasterers in cities of 25,000 or more were calculated from the figures given for each city.

[3] Practically all the organized bricklayers, masons, and plasterers of the country are included in the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' International Union and in the Operative Plasterers' International Association. The statistics for membership in the former were taken from the Forty-fifth Annual Report of the President and Secretary for the term ending December 1, 1910, pp. 272–293; and for the latter union the statistics for membership were taken from The Plasterer, July, 1910, pp. 17–18. The totals for each State were calculated from the reported membership of each local union.

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